


Carolina country



2008 Garden Guide

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INSIDE:
Delivering renewable energy
America's energy future
North Carolina herring



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7 Ways Your Zoysia Grass Lawn Saves You Time, Work, and Money!

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Won't Heat Kill. When other grasses burn out in summer drought and heat, Amazoy remains luxuriously green.

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6 CHOKES OUT CRABGRASS AND WEEDS ALL SUMMER

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<input type="checkbox"/> 2 Basic Packs + 1 FREE	200	100	—	\$ 23.85	\$ 15.90	\$ 5.00	30%
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We ship all orders the same day plugs are packed at earliest correct planting time in your area.



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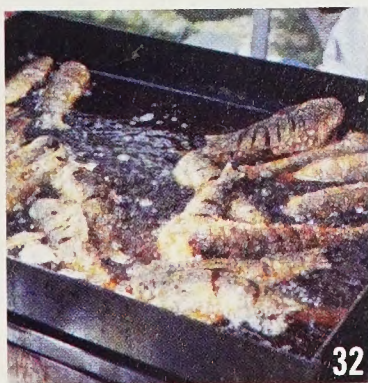
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The annual spring run of herring in northeastern North Carolina has slowed to a stroll.

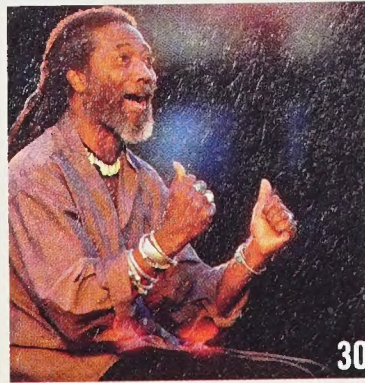
ON THE COVER

Natural beauty at Raft Swamp Farm in Hoke County, photographed by Don McKenzie.

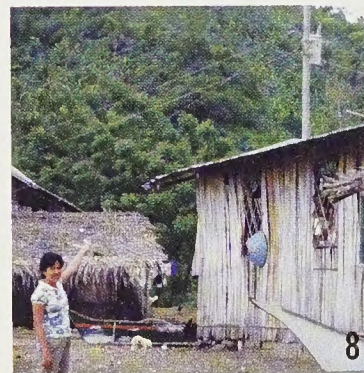
Photo above: Joann Hunter, a member of Surry-Yadkin EMC, photographed these Indian Summer black-eyed susans in her Tobaccoville rose garden.



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North Carolina's electric cooperatives provide reliable, safe and affordable electric service to 850,000 homes, farms and businesses in North Carolina. The 26 electric cooperatives are each member-owned, not-for-profit and overseen by a board of directors elected by the membership.

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HAS YOUR ADDRESS CHANGED?

Carolina Country magazine is available monthly to members of North Carolina's electric cooperatives. If you are a member of one of these cooperatives but do not receive Carolina Country, you may request a subscription by calling Member Services at the office of your cooperative. If your address has changed, please inform your cooperative.

Electric cooperatives know what works

By Nelle Hotchkiss



Demand for electricity nationally will increase by 40 percent during the next 22 years, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. Even if we reduce consumption by 9 percent through better efficiency and more renewable power sources, our nation will soon run out of excess generating capacity. We still need to build more power plants and transmission lines to keep the lights on.

This raises a catch-22 situation. Unless significantly more power plants are placed into service soon, there's a good chance consumers could experience brownouts and even rolling blackouts. But this generation will be the most expensive in history, coming at a time when prices for fuels to produce electricity and construction materials are skyrocketing.

In addition, lawmakers in Washington and Raleigh are considering additional costs to require power plants to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Because electric co-ops in the Southeast and elsewhere are experiencing 2.6 percent overall growth (twice the national average), we take seriously our responsibility of maintaining a safe, reliable and affordable supply of power. We also have a special responsibility to protect you against crippling increases in electricity costs.

When it comes to meeting energy challenges, electric co-ops believe answers can be found in a diversified mix of advancements in energy efficiency and technology; renewable, nuclear and natural gas generation; and advanced coal generation. No magic "silver bullet" resolution exists.


On the climate change front, electric co-ops believe recommendations developed by the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI), a non-profit utility-sponsored consortium based in Palo Alto, Calif., whose members include electric co-ops, offer a workable framework. [See our article on pages 14-15.] EPRI has spelled out

how U.S. electric utilities can slash carbon dioxide emissions by roughly 45 percent, even as our power supply obligations rise by about 40 percent. We are looking at seven principal areas:

1. Boosting energy efficiency
2. Investing in renewable energy
3. Expanding nuclear power capacity
4. Capturing carbon produced by coal-fired power plants and storing it deep underground
5. Improving the operating efficiency of coal-fired power plants
6. Adding distributed generation resources (power generators closer to users)
7. Putting plug-in hybrid electric vehicles on the road

Consumer-owned electric co-ops already are tackling each of these goals, which also help reduce the need for new power plants. Today, more than 80 percent of co-ops supply electricity produced by renewable power sources. North Carolina's co-ops support development of several renewable energy initiatives and will be doing more.

Of course, implementing many of EPRI's ideas on a large scale will require a massive investment of government resources—similar to putting a man on the moon—and mobilization of every sector of the economy. But electric co-ops know what works. We can help elected officials understand what is technologically feasible and can be sustained economically—and politically.

When it comes to energy, electric co-ops recognize that consumers ultimately pay the freight for whatever decisions are made. Our commitment to you is to work to ensure that decisionmakers understand this fact as well. Through it all, the co-op drumbeat will be loud and clear: "We're putting consumers first." 

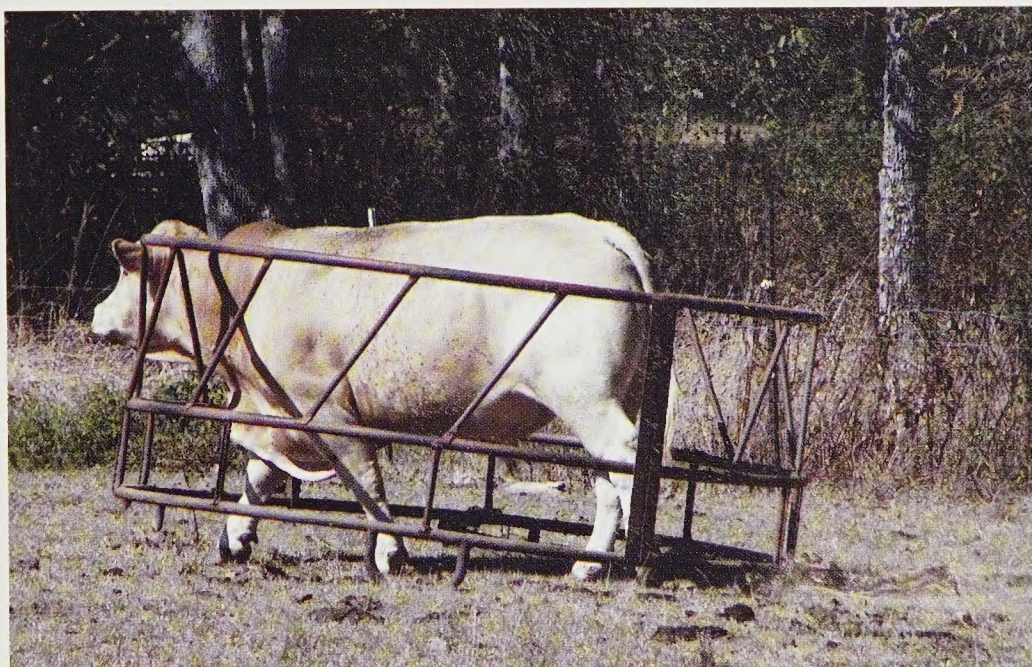
Nelle Hotchkiss is senior vice president for Corporate Relations with the North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives. She regularly is among those who speak with government officials to represent electric cooperative and rural community interests.

When is a mule not a mule?

The historical photo we ran in February's magazine with Donna Campbell Smith's "Mules" article actually shows a donkey, not a mule. Shannon Hoffman, a board member of the Carolina Mule Association, helped us clarify the difference.

Mule ears are shorter than a donkey's but longer than a horse's. Mules have a stronger constitution and have bigger, stronger hoofs than a donkey. They have a full tail like a horse, not a "broom tail." Mules have a rounder eye, compared to the donkey's triangular-shaped eye. Mules have a finer hair coat than the donkey's.

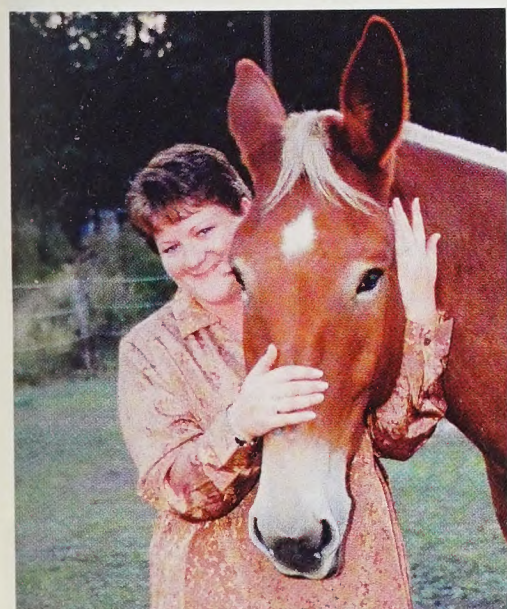
A mule is produced when a male donkey (called a jack) is mated with a female horse (a mare). The resulting mule is male (called a john or a horse mule) and usually is sterile and cannot reproduce. A male horse (stallion) mated with a female donkey (jennet) can produce female mule that is sometimes called a hinny or molly. Johns and mollies are collectively known as mules.



Bull in the ring

I took this photo of Sonny, the bull belonging to my neighbors, Ritchie and Gina Price. Sonny managed to get himself into a predicament. All day he lugged this hay-ring around everywhere he went. We'll never know just how or when he exactly managed to do this trick. But Ritchie and his father-in-law were able to release him when they got home from work. This puts another perspective on the term "bull ring."

Tracy Sizemore, Monroe, Union Power Cooperative



These photos show Shannon Hoffman with her donkey Chester (top) and her mule Seven.

News on weeds

Forget the herbicides and cumbersome rolls of perforated plastics. The following is an effective, cheap, eco-friendly method for eliminating and preventing weeds from popping up in garden beds. What you'll need: an old newspaper and some mulch or pine straw. Spread the newspaper pages two or three thick over the ground and around your shrubs and flowers. Then mulch lightly over the newspaper. (Don't mulch too heavily or weeds will happily spout anew and root in the mulch.) The paper will allow water to permeate, but without sunlight or air, the weeds will be smothered and die. Because the newspaper is biodegradable, in time it will become one with the garden earth, and by then your weeds will be history.

Margret Galvan, Creedmoor, Wake Electric

An A&P family

I really enjoy your magazine. Thank you for having such strong focus on quality. It shows. In the February issue on page 24 of the "Welcome to the World of Work" section, Mr. Tim Steward of Hope Mills commented that "A&P is now defunct." While A&P is not what it was and is not visible in most of the U.S., it does still exist. You can visit the Web site, www.aptea.com.

I worked at A&P as a meat cutter. My wife and her mother were A&P meat wrappers. And my father-in-law was a produce manager. We all say the A&P days were the good old days.

Larry Smith, Laurinburg, Lumbee River EMC

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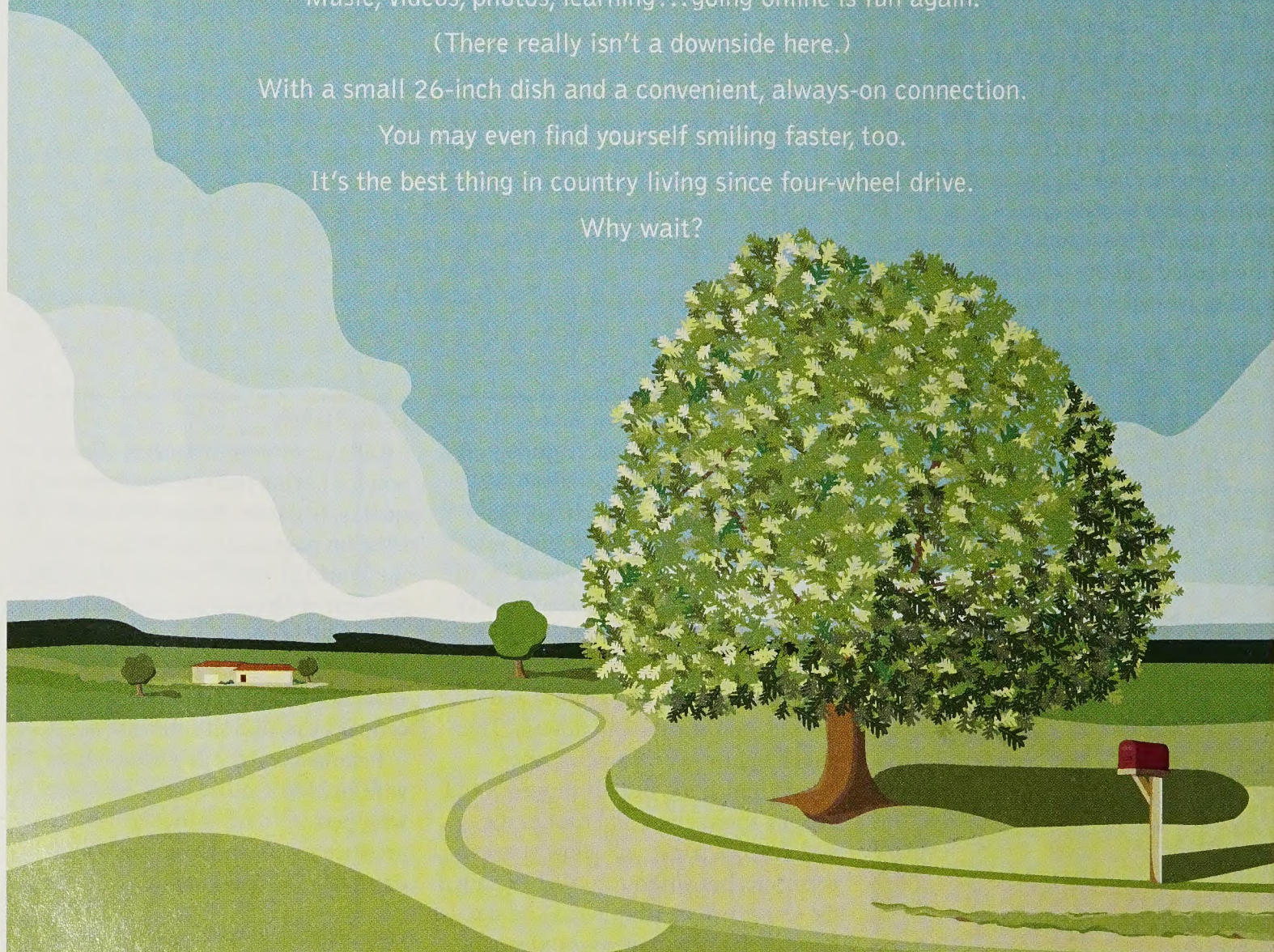
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French Broad EMC's Rocky Fleming piloted young Michael Thomas over his school grounds in Madison County where other students left him a message.

French Broad EMC has heart

Employees at French Broad Electric Membership Corporation in western North Carolina recently made a dream come true for Michael Thomas. Michael, a fifth-grader at Brush Creek Elementary in Madison County, has juvenile Huntington's Disease.

Huntington's Disease causes neurological symptoms that make movement difficult for victims. Michael's home did not have a bedroom and bathroom easily accessible to him. So members of Biltmore Baptist Church, the Eblen Foundation, and Progress Energy and employees of French Broad EMC began building the rooms onto his house.

Also, French Broad EMC's safety director Rocky Flemming, who also is a pilot, took Michael for a ride in his airplane. They flew over Brush Creek Elementary, where students and teachers formed a heart on the playground for Michael to see from the air.

The French Broad EMC employees who donated time and materials to Michael and his family included Rocky Flemming, Dwayne Self, Dwaine Strom, Greg Fowler, Kevin Roberts, Rodney Wallin and Roger Reese.

Randolph EMC equipment helps a cooperative in the Philippines

If someone were to ask, "How big is the Randolph EMC Touchstone Energy cooperative?", the answer would be that Randolph EMC's service territory reaches into parts of the five centrally located counties of North Carolina. That service territory stretches about 90 miles north to south and 60 miles east to west. With Asheboro located near the center of the system, one might guess that the farthest transformer located from the offices of Randolph EMC is probably 45 to 50 miles. That was true, until recently.

Today, the Randolph EMC transformer farthest from its Asheboro office is more than 8,727 miles away, located in a small fishing village called Tumonaw in the Philippine islands. That transformer is one of more than 100 transformers that Randolph EMC had listed as scrap. They were being stored in a substation ready to be hauled off. They had very little value to Randolph EMC, but then it was discovered that they could be of great value to the international efforts of the National Rural Electrification Cooperative Associations International Foundation.

When Randolph EMC first heard about the Philippine Project, a program designed to help electrify several small fishing villages in the Philippines, it brought back memories of the early days of the cooperative movement. The obstacles the Filipino villagers faced were similar to those faced by the early pioneers of Randolph EMC. They, too, were not interested in making money for themselves, but wanted to bring a better quality of life for their families and their neighbors.

Since the beginnings of the Philippines program in July 2001, more than 20 villages have received power, more than 250 house wiring loans have been issued, and more than 100 computers have been installed. As a result, a sewing cooperative, a welding shop, a body repair shop and numerous agricultural projects have started business.



Mary Ann Santos, coordinator of the Tumonaw project in the Philippines, points to a transformer like the one sent to the island by Randolph EMC.

WHERE IN CAROLINA COUNTRY IS THIS? ↗



February winner:

The February photo showed the former Cheshire Hall of what was the upscale Vade Mecum Springs hotel resort in Stokes County, near Danbury. It is on the grounds of what is now the 4-H Camp Sertoma. We're told it was built in 1908. Virgil Settle of Elkin told us, "While everyone calls it the 'hotel,' it was actually the servants quarters for a much larger building (the real hotel) that stood where the camp's chapel is now." Hannah Poteat remembers working here one summer as a teenager cleaning rooms. Others sent memories of Grange camp here. Some of you guessed it was the Balsam Inn, Cragmont Free Will Baptist Youth Camp, Green River Plantation, Green Hill Inn, Ellerbe Springs Inn, Hiddenite Center, Seven Springs Hotel and the Swannanoa 4-H Camp. Correct answers were numbered and the \$25 winner chosen at random was Charlene Craver of Lexington, a member of EnergyUnited.

This is a Carolina Country scene in Touchstone Energy territory. If you know where it is, send your answer by March 7 with your name, address, phone number and the name of your electric cooperative.

By e-mail: where@carolinacountry.com

Or by mail: Where in Carolina Country?
P.O. Box 27306
Raleigh, NC 27611

The winner, chosen at random and announced in our April issue, will receive \$25.



Coalition considers 17 transmission projects in North Carolina

Participants in the North Carolina Transmission Planning Collaborative (NCTPC) have identified 17 major transmission projects, representing more than \$400 million in investments over the next decade, as part of the 2007–2017 Collaborative Transmission Plan for North Carolina.

The collaborative was formed in 2005 to develop a shared plan for electric transmission system enhancements in the state. Participants include Duke Energy Carolinas, Progress Energy Carolinas, North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation and ElectricCities of North Carolina.

The scope of the 2007 planning study included a base reliability analysis as well as analysis of potential resource supply options. The purpose of the base reliability analysis is to evaluate the transmission system's ability to meet load growth projected for years 2012 through 2017. The purpose of the

resource supply analysis is to evaluate transmission system impacts for various resource supply options to meet future native load requirements. Major projects are defined as those requiring investments in excess of \$10 million.

The 2007–2017 plan report can be viewed on the NCTPC website at www.nctpc.org/nctpc under the Reference Documents section.

The major transmission projects identified in the 2007–2017 plan report are expected to be implemented over the next 10 years. These planned projects are subject to change based on evolving system conditions which is why this is an annual planning process that factors in new system information as conditions change. Work has already begun on the 2008 study and those Collaborative Transmission Plan results are expected to be published at the end of this year.

"The success of the NCTPC continues to demonstrate that regional

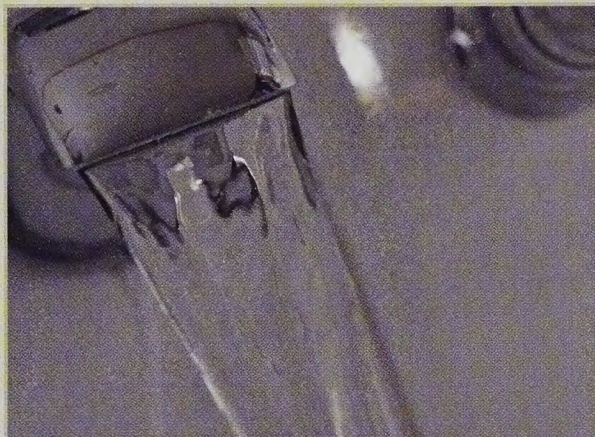
planning can work with the existing state planning processes to provide value to electricity customers in North Carolina," said Jim Kerr, commissioner on the North Carolina Utilities Commission and past-president of the National Association of regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC).

The NCTPC was established to provide the participants and other stakeholders an opportunity to participate in the electric transmission planning process for North Carolina, and to develop a single coordinated transmission plan for North Carolina electric utilities that includes reliability and enhanced transmission access considerations. Serious effort is given to appropriately balance costs, benefits and risks associated with the use of transmission and generation resources.

For more information, go to the NCTPC Web site at www.nctpc.org/nctpc.

Try This!

Tankless Water Heaters



Q: In the interest of saving energy we are considering a tankless hot water heater when our 18-year-old, 50-gallon water heater is replaced. Are tankless water heaters more energy efficient? What type of connection do they require?

*Barbara and Joe Cavalluzzi,
Sanford, Central EMC*

A: Regardless of fuel source, the benefit of going “tankless” is that it eliminates standby heat loss of the stored hot water in a tank. Does this tankless technology save energy money over the traditional tank water heaters? The answer is yes, but at what installed first cost and what real savings?

These briefcase-sized units use computer chips, high-power inputs, and an array of sensors to heat water only when the hot water tap is open. The water is heated very rapidly as it flows through a heat exchange coil. By using a tankless water heater, there is no wasted water while you wait for hot water to reach the faucet. There’s also no standby loss from the tank while it sits day-in and day-out.

Tankless water heaters are sized by flow rate as measured in gallons per minute (GPM). The size of the unit needs to be big enough to handle the highest demand for hot water at any one time. Because tankless water heaters must heat water very fast, they have limited capacity and have difficulty supplying multiple hot water needs simultaneously. Therefore, you may need a second tankless heater if you plan on washing clothes while running the dishwasher and taking a shower.

Also, residential tankless water heaters require 240 volts and up to 150 amps of capacity to operate. This level of demand exceeds that of most residential services. In addition to the cost of the heater, significant wiring upgrades could be required for your electrical system.

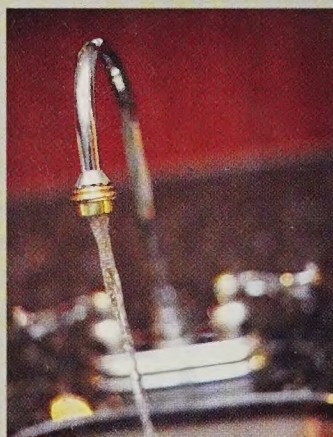
The installation may also affect your co-op’s electric system. A transformer and service upgrade may be required if this type of load was added to your home. Contact your electric cooperative before purchasing this type of equipment.

A traditional high-efficiency tank water heater, combined with hot water savings strategies that include low flow shower heads, aerated faucets, insulated piping and other measures, make the best overall financial sense.

You may also consider reviewing solar water heating. Tax incentives can make this an attractive solution.

Visit the Alliance to Save Energy Web site to learn more: www.aceee.org/consumerguide/waterheating

Sources: TSE Services and Tideland EMC.



Can you help others save energy?

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Recycling Mercury & Batteries

A number of common consumer products contain mercury, a toxic substance that can be harmful to human health and the environment. The Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) encourages users of mercury-containing products to become familiar with local recycling laws.

Thermostats

Many wall thermostats contain mercury switches that provide for efficient control of temperature. The switches are securely housed, and the likelihood of consumer exposure to mercury remains extremely low. When taken out of service, however, mercury thermostats should be managed and disposed of properly.

The Thermostat Recycling Corporation, a not-for-profit organization, facilitates the collection of all brands of used, wall-mounted mercury-switch thermostats by heating, cooling and air conditioning wholesalers. Local electrical distributors or contractors may be a participant in TRC and can help you to recycle your thermostat.

Rechargeable batteries

Rechargeable batteries are commonly found in cordless power tools, cellular and cordless phones, laptop computers, camcorders, digital cameras, and remote-controlled toys. The Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation (RBRC) provides a recycling service for used portable, rechargeable batteries and old cell phones. Visit www.RBRC.org to find local participating retailers and other sites that recycle rechargeable batteries.

Ordinary household batteries

Common household batteries (e.g., AAA, AA, C, and D) do not contain hazardous materials. It is permissible in all states, with the exception of California, to dispose of them in household trash.

Mercury-containing lamps/bulbs

Many types of bulbs—including compact fluorescent and certain high-intensity discharge lamps contain mercury. Mercury lamps are highly efficient and provide substantial energy savings. Such lamps must be managed appropriately and disposed of in accordance with local laws.



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Delivering renewable energy

More renewable energy for North Carolina will need an upgraded transmission network to go where it will be needed

By Jane Pritchard

When we are ready to connect large scale renewable or “green” energy resources to our state’s transmission system, will the grid be ready to deliver this energy to cooperative members?

That was an important question on the minds of staff members at the North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation (NCEMC), the power supply organization for 22 of the state’s 26 electric cooperatives, when they issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) last fall for up to 200 megawatts of renewable energy resources to serve the future needs of co-op members.

The RFP was issued as a step to help carry out North Carolina’s Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Portfolio Standards (REPS), energy policy legislation signed into law in August 2007 by Gov. Mike Easley.

The law requires electric cooperatives, by 2018, to have 10 percent of their total electricity needs generated from renewable resources or displaced through effective energy efficiency programs.

The RFP stated that NCEMC “strongly prefers” proposals for renewable energy resources located in North Carolina, and even better, interconnected to the electric transmission system.

So why are transmission lines such a big deal?

“Renewable sources of energy, such as wind farms, are often located in remote areas, away from adequate transmission lines,” said Joe Brannan, COO of NCEMC.

“Building or purchasing green energy is a challenge in itself,” he said, “but transmission can be a key constraint for many of these projects to put energy on the electric grid.”

For energy to be useful and affordable, it must be easily transportable to the population centers usually located far from many renewable energy generation plants. Our country’s electric transmission system is more than 50

years old. “It served our nation and our state well during the last few decades,” Brannan said, “but we will need to make improvements to meet the significant concerns presenting themselves to us today, like the reduction of greenhouse gases, connecting renewable resources and meeting increasing demands for electricity on a 24/7 basis.”

Some renewable energy resources, notably wind and solar, are also “intermittent” in nature, which means they are not continuously available as a source of fuel for energy production. Brannan said, “We can manage more traditional generation facilities—nuclear, coal, gas—by dispatching or ‘running’ them when they are required. This provides a reliable and economic use of these facilities.”

“Unfortunately,” he added, “we cannot control the wind or the sun and so can’t dispatch or ‘run’ these resources, but rather must take the energy when it is available.”

North Carolina’s electric cooperatives have long been responsible stewards of the environment. “We care about preserving the beauty of the areas we serve,” said Brannan. “And we are committed to meeting our legislative mandate, which includes the use of

renewable energy resources.”

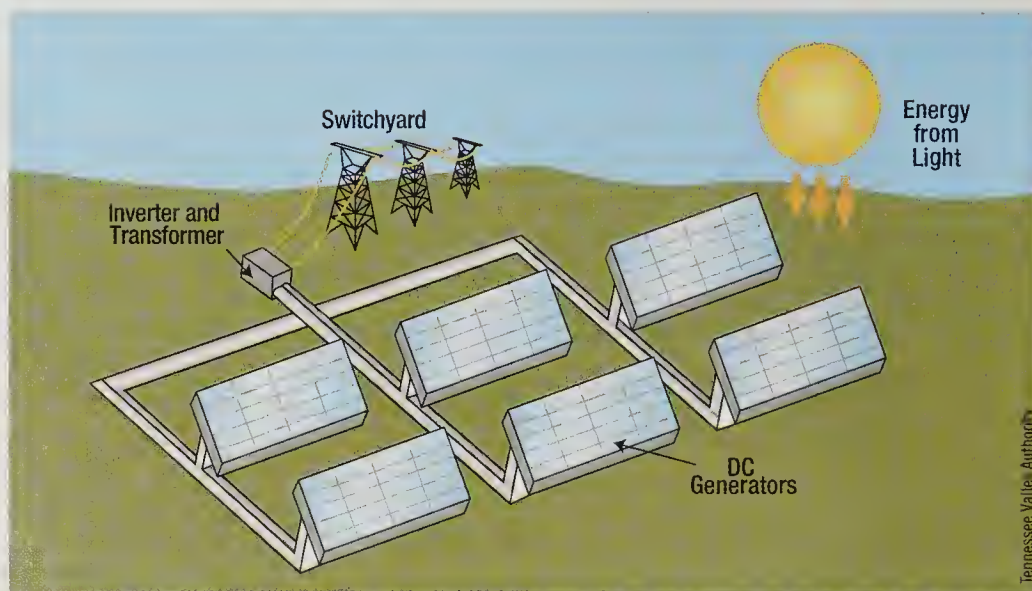
With that commitment, however, come numerous challenges. The cooperatives are determined to balance the benefits of renewable energy against probable higher costs for co-op consumers.

“It can be a real juggling act,” Brannan said. “We support development of green resources, but we also know that the electric grid will require expansion regionally and nationally to effectively and efficiently integrate large-scale renewable power with the existing generation supply.”

NCEMC, on behalf of the electric cooperatives, is an active participant in the NC Transmission Planning Collaborative. The Collaborative was formed in 2005 to encourage the state’s electric utilities to work together to plan for transmission system enhancements. The group’s goal is to plan for the expansion of the state’s electric grid to ensure reliable delivery of energy at the lowest possible cost.

“A modern, efficient transmission system is vital to the co-ops if we’re to continue delivering reliable and affordable power to our members,” said Brannan. “Over the coming years, we will be supporting efforts to build new transmission lines or to improve existing facilities as needed both for the delivery of traditional energy resources and renewable ones.”

Jane Pritchard is director of corporate communications for the North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation.



Renewable energy generation plants will need a network of transmission to deliver the power to distant distribution points.



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POWER FORWARD▶▶

Combining technology, efficiency and common sense can move America toward a safe and sound energy future

By Jennifer Taylor and Scott Gates

“Technology is what it’s all about. It gives electric cooperatives the opportunity to address climate change and at the same time generate the amount of power we need.”

Glenn English
National Rural Electric
Cooperative Association

Discussions about global climate change inevitably include electric power generation. The reason: power plants that burn fossil fuels such as coal and natural gas produce more than 2 billion tons of carbon dioxide every year. That’s 39 percent of all man-made carbon dioxide, the largest single source of the principal greenhouse gas blamed for contributing to climate change.

As the climate change debate takes aim at power generation, electric cooperatives have a responsibility to keep policymakers informed, ensuring that the right solutions are developed and implemented in ways that keep the nation’s lights on in an affordable way.

The Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI), a non-profit, utility-sponsored consortium whose members include electric co-ops, believes we can do just that. It has developed a technology-based framework that would achieve a 45 percent reduction in carbon dioxide emissions over the next 22 years while meeting growing demand for electricity.

“Technology is what it’s all about,” notes Glenn English, CEO of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the

Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation’s 900-plus consumer-owned electric co-ops. “It gives electric cooperatives the opportunity to address climate change and at the same time generate the amount of power we need to meet the needs of our members.”

Even though demand for electricity is predicted to increase by 18 percent over the next decade, capacity to generate electricity will only increase by 8.4 percent, according to the North American Electric Reliability Corporation, a non-profit organization charged with monitoring America’s power system reliability. This means that unless new power plants and transmission facilities to carry the power are constructed, Americans will have to adjust to the almost unimaginable possibility of not having electricity available every time they flip on a switch.

What’s more, climate change legislation could have a dramatic effect on power generation and electric bills. Local, state and federal lawmakers are currently considering additional costs on power plants to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, notably carbon dioxide.

EPRI’s analysis recognizes this reality and encourages aggressive new action in

Electric co-ops are currently analyzing a project that converts heat coming off natural gas-fired generators into what could be considered bonus electricity. This plant near St. Anthony, North Dakota, is a part of that effort.

seven specific areas: boosting energy efficiency, improving the operating efficiency of advanced coal-fired power plants, investing in renewable energy, expanding nuclear power capacity, capturing carbon dioxide produced by coal-fired power plants and storing it deep underground, adding distributed generation resources, and putting plug-in hybrid electric vehicles on the road.

The recommendations are sound, although implementing many of the ideas on a large scale will require a massive investment of government resources and mobilization of every sector of the economy. Making some technologies, notably carbon capture and storage, commercially viable will require expensive research and development—an estimated \$1.4 billion per year through 2030. But Revis James, director of EPRI's Energy Technology Assessment Center, feels confident that the overall goals can be met through a progression of milestones.

"Let's suppose that as a society we want to send a man to Mars," James says, providing an example of a project similar in scale. "Are we currently building rockets designed to go to Mars? Absolutely not. But we do have technology available now that will be valuable in getting there."

James sees curbing carbon emissions in the same way. "Underlying research has already laid the foundation. We've got a good bedrock of current technology to build on in years to come."

Energy efficiency

Energy efficiency stands as the most cost-effective approach for managing electricity use and lowering greenhouse gas emissions. Steps include making simple modifications around a home or office, such as replacing insulation or caulking air leaks around doors and windows. Energy efficiency measures also reduce how much more generation needs to be built. Still, energy efficiency improvements will

reduce electricity consumption by 9 percent over the next 22 years, according to EPRI.

Renewable energy

New domestic renewable energy resources, such as wind, solar, hydro, and biomass (including landfill gas, livestock waste, timber byproducts, and crop residue), can help diversify our nation's fuel mix, shrink dependency on foreign sources of energy, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. EPRI sees "green power," led by wind energy, leaping from 2 percent of kilowatt-hours produced nationally today to 6.7 percent by 2030. Of course, transmission lines must be built to bring the power generated at remote wind farms, for example, to population centers.

Nuclear energy

More nuclear power plants will be needed to meet the growing demand for electricity and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. EPRI proposes that roughly 12 two-unit nuclear plants come online in the United States by 2020, with two additional plants then added each year through 2030. On average, it takes 10 or more years to construct such a facility, including permitting. Presently, only four license applications for new nuclear reactors have been submitted to the federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission, although many more are expected. Although nuclear plants supply 20 percent of the nation's electricity, none have been ordered in the U.S. for about 30 years.

Advanced coal plant efficiency


Presently, coal generates 50 percent of our country's electricity and new technologies are being developed to improve plant efficiency and reduce carbon emissions. These new technologies must be implemented to improve coal plant operating efficiencies—finding ways to burn less coal and still produce the same amount of power.

Carbon capture and storage

Effective ways to capture and store carbon dioxide emissions can make coal—a readily available and affordable fuel—an integral part of the nation's electricity supply. Research and development of carbon capture and storage technology will likely take years, if not decades, to come online—assuming the federal government provides sufficient funding.

Plug-in hybrid electric vehicles and distributed generation

Plug-in hybrid electric vehicles and small-scale power plants owned by consumers are also among EPRI's solutions. In the first project of its kind, electric co-ops are testing whether plug-in hybrid electric vehicles can wean the nation off foreign oil, curb greenhouse gas emissions, and increase off-peak electric sales. Distributed energy resources, such as "backyard" wind and solar systems, as well as emergency generators, help electric co-ops reduce load during times of peak demand—the electric utility industry's equivalent of rush-hour traffic and the time when power costs skyrocket—offset the need to build new power plants and transmission lines, and slash greenhouse gas emissions.

In coming months, a closer look at each of these seven areas will demonstrate how electric co-ops have emerged as industry leaders, all in their continuing efforts to provide safe, reliable, and affordable power in an environmentally responsible manner. 

Jennifer Taylor writes about consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. Scott Gates writes on technology and energy efficiency for NRECA.

Sources: Department of Energy, Energy Information Administration; North American Electric Reliability Corporation; Electric Power Research Institute; National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus not-for-profit, consumer-owned electric co-ops.

Clone Your Own

Growing shrubs from stem cuttings can be cheap, easy and fun

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY CARLA BURGESS

Taking cuttings is an inexpensive way to multiply some of your garden favorites or to propagate a friend's or neighbor's plant that you've been admiring. In addition, it may be the only way to obtain plants that are hard to find or lost to the nursery trade. To produce a plant that has identical characteristics (such as bloom color), the only way to ensure an exact copy, or clone, is to propagate it using vegetative techniques such as by rooting a stem cutting.

Many kinds of woody plants are fairly easy to grow from stem cuttings, if you follow a few guidelines. Start by learning a bit about the propagation requirements of the species you select, as some will not produce roots via stem cuttings.

It's critical to take the cutting at the right time. Depending on the species, plants will root in either or all of the following stages of growth: softwood, semi-hardwood or hardwood. Forsythias and camellias, for example, may be propagated from softwood, semi-hardwood or hardwood cuttings. Blueberries, on the other hand, are best rooted from softwood or semi-hardwood cuttings. Take your cue from the growth stage of the plant, not the calendar.



Taking cuttings is an inexpensive way to multiply some of your garden favorites or to propagate a friend's or neighbor's plant that you've been admiring.

IDENTIFYING GROWTH STAGES

Plant Name*	Stage of Growth for Taking Cuttings
American holly	SH
Azalea (deciduous)	SW
Azalea (evergreen)	SH
Blueberry	SW, SH
Camellia	SW, SH, HW
Forsythia	SW, SH, HW
Hydrangea	SW, HW
Juniper	SH, HW
Lilac	SW
Yew	SH, HW

SW=Softwood
SH=Semi-hardwood
HW=Hardwood

*For more information about propagating other specific plant species, see the resource list.

Identifying growth stages:

- ↪ Softwood—new growth that is slightly firm; stems will snap easily when bent.
- ↪ Semi-hardwood—the current season's growth that has partially matured or "hardened"; at this time, leaves will have reached their full size.
- ↪ Hardwood—the mature growth from the previous year's growth; plants are dormant at this stage. With deciduous species, hardwood cuttings may be taken after leaves have dropped and up until the time that new shoots appear. Don't take the term "hardwood" literally—brittle stems (from two or more seasons ago) are generally no longer viable for cuttings.

Your success also depends on using the right growing medium and providing proper moisture and other environmental conditions. Your set-up doesn't have to be fancy: It can be as simple as a pot covered with a plastic bag.

GROWING MEDIUM

A soil-less mix is the best medium and usually includes combinations of peat, perlite or sand. The medium needs to be coarse, or porous, so that air can circulate around the stem. You can make this mixture yourself by combining equal amounts of peat and perlite (1:1 ratio). Other possible recipes are 1 part peat: 1 part sand. Use sharp sand such as

builder's sand, not children's sandbox sand. In lieu of peat, you can substitute the same amount of coir (coconut husk fiber) or very fine pine bark (you may need to sieve it to remove any large pieces). The growing medium should be thoroughly moistened before you insert cuttings. Don't add any fertilizer until after roots have formed. The medium should be kept moist but not saturated or the cuttings will rot. Fill the cutting "bed" with at least 3 inches of medium. Make sure containers have adequate drainage holes.

ROOTING AIDS

Cuttings will produce roots faster and in greater abundance with the aid of a rooting hormone. Two types of synthetic rooting hormones are widely used. Naphthaleneacetic acid (NAA) is found in products such as Rootone, which is sold in powdered form. Indolebutyric acid (IBA) is the primary ingredient in products such as Dip 'n Grow, a liquid form. Some rooting hormones are also available in gel form. Liquid form is highly recommended for new propagators working with woody cuttings, but powder is acceptable. If you can't find rooting hormones locally, check mail-order gardening catalogs or search for sources online.

TAKING AND STICKING THE CUTTINGS

Take cuttings from plants that are free of disease and not drought-stressed. Use sharp hand pruners or a knife to sever the stem. Make a clean cut, leaving no ragged edges. A typical cutting is 4 to 6 inches long. However, cuttings of slow-growing or dwarf plant varieties will necessarily be shorter, as there is a scant amount of new growth each year. Before sticking the cutting, remove the leaves from the lower one-third to one-half of the stem. Also remove any flowers or seeds. Dip the base of the cutting into the liquid hormone for 1 second, give it about a minute to dry, then stick it into the medium just deeply enough that it can support itself—in general, no more than a third its length. (If using powder, tap the cutting gently to shake off excess powder.) You may insert several cuttings into the same pot, or use a communal bed such as a pan or flat. Do not push cuttings all the way to the bottom. Place cuttings 1 or 2 inches apart, with no leaves touching. If inserting cuttings into individual pots, cover with a clear or opaque plastic bag to maintain humidity. If using trays, cover with a plastic lid. Whatever type of containers you choose, be sure there are adequate drainage holes.

TENDING THE CUTTINGS

If you root cuttings indoors, place containers in a relatively warm location underneath fluorescent lighting, if possible (fixtures or "shop lights" with bulbs are readily available at hardware stores). During the growing season, cuttings may be rooted outdoors. Cover containers and place in a location out of direct sunlight. If your modified greenhouse becomes overheated, cuttings will perish. Water your medium if necessary, or mist cuttings with a spritzer or spray of the hose. You should see a little "fog" from the

humidity inside. Remove the cover only if necessary to vent excess heat or to add water.

Wait at least three weeks before disturbing the cuttings. Most cuttings will root in several weeks to a couple of months. You'll know that roots have formed if you feel a bit of resistance when you give the cutting a gentle tug. Pot the rooted cuttings individually and apply a dilute fertilizer initially. Pamper your young plants, and wait for a season or two before transplanting them in the garden.

TIPS & TRICKS

- ↪ If it is warm outdoors and you'll be transporting them some distance, seal fresh cuttings in a plastic bag and carry them in a cooler. It is very important that they not dry out.
- ↪ The following simple containers may be used for rooting cuttings: A terrarium or plastic bin topped with a piece of plastic. A plastic soda bottle or milk jug inverted over the top of a pot. A plastic pot placed inside a sealed plastic bag.
- ↪ Manipulating peat and perlite sends up a large amount of dust. Before handling it, spray water inside the bag to wet it down. You may want to wear a dust mask while mixing the medium.
- ↪ Some articles suggest you "wound" the base of the cutting before sticking it. If wounding is suggested, do not "grate" or otherwise peel the bark off the cutting. You will make just a small, shallow incision.

RESOURCES:

- ↪ "Growing and Propagating Showy Native Woody Plants" by Richard Bir
- ↪ "Manual of Woody Landscape Plants: Their Identification, Ornamental Characteristics, Culture, Propagation and Uses" by Michael Dirr
- ↪ "Plant Propagation by Stem Cuttings: Instructions for the Home Gardener" (NCSU Horticultural Information Leaflet #8702) by Frank Blazich (Download at www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/hil/hil-8702.html or contact your Cooperative Extension agent to request a copy.)



If inserting cuttings into individual pots, cover with a clear or opaque plastic bag to maintain humidity.

Lessons from Hobbits

How to make the most garden out of a small space

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY CARLA BURGESS

Its name might suggest a landscape peopled by decorative gnomes in a forest of bonsai trees, but the Hobbit Garden, a 2-acre private garden on the outskirts of Raleigh, is anything but. Open to the public by appointment, it is not a cutesy, quaint tourist attraction. It's a serious garden, filled with dozens of species of rare, unusual ornamental plants and guided by nature's blueprint.

Certainly visitors will see dwarf trees and shrubs, but those plants adopt this form naturally, without being forced into submission. Here, people can learn how to make the most of a small space, or to make larger spaces more manageable and intriguing by creating garden "rooms." Its beauty and charm notwithstanding, this is a teaching garden.

Meet Willie Pilkington, the full-time caretaker and plant specialist, and John Dilley, the design guru. The Hobbit Garden's first incarnation was a 50-by-80 foot garden on a tiny lot in downtown Raleigh. During neighborhood garden tours, visitors would queue up for blocks to get a glimpse of a plant collector's paradise. When they moved to a large lot that was virtually a blank canvas, Pilkington and Dilley took their own style of small-scale gardening with them rather than create sprawling perennial beds bordering a manicured lawn.

The look of the garden is inspired by a love for the forest and an appreciation of natural habitats, an ethic that was obvious in author J.R.R. Tolkien's verdant, utopian landscape of the fictional "Shire." When their space demanded a proper name, says Pilkington, "The Hobbit Garden" sprang readily to mind.

In the garden, neatly swept, sandy pathways wind through outdoor rooms that flow gracefully into one another. If you wander all the way through and then return from a different direction, you may swear you haven't been in that spot before. Surprisingly, the sheltered spaces feel quite open.



A low-sweeping Juniperus horizontalis 'Blue Rug' (at ground level, front), diminutive Pinus densiflora (left) and Cryptomeria japonica 'Yellow Twig' (right) frame a view of one of the garden's interior "rooms."

"Most homeowners have a tendency to go around the perimeter and plant rows of everything," says Dilley. "By using islands and creating curtains of green hedges, it actually creates the illusion of more space."

Dilley suggests using broad-leaf evergreens, most of which can withstand severe pruning, as screeners. The majority of narrowleaf evergreens, such as Leyland cypress, are intolerant of heavy cutting, he says, with exceptions being yews in the genus *Taxus*. He is particularly fond of Carolina cherry laurel (*Prunus caroliniana*) as a hedging plant. 'Bright 'N Tight' is a tightly branched, compact and pyramidal form.

Today, says Pilkington, people can bring the forest into a garden without physically overwhelming it. Virtually every native species of tree and shrub has likely produced a seedling or offshoot that has some variations, often uniquely ornamental, from the parent

plant. Once someone discovers such a specimen, that lucky horticulturist can cultivate it, see if the desirable characteristic can be retained and eventually make the new variety available.

Sometimes a variety occurs that is comparatively shorter than the species, maintaining a compact, or dwarf, form. Other times a variety may assume a more narrow overall shape than its parent, with branches that grow close to the trunk in a more vertical direction. The latter form is often referred to as "slender profile." Such is true of the columnar sweetgum, 'Slender Silhouette', which may grow 60 feet tall but only 6 feet wide.

"If you're on a small property, miniature, dwarf or slender profile is the way to go, especially if you're a collector," says Pilkington. "It will not outgrow its space, generally speaking, and will not intrude on your neighbor's property." This means that plants are allowed to reach their full potential, remaining "untortured," he says with an ironic smile. "If you

can get out of what is the so-called standard for residential planting, which is: 'Prune, prune, prune', 'Shape, shape, shape', you start to realize what you enjoy about the forest—the natural shape of things and how they grow together."

Pilkington says the guiding philosophy in the Hobbit Garden is low-maintenance. They prefer plants that can hold their own against the slings and arrows of the local climate. "In nature, no one is raking, no one is spraying, no one is mulching, no one is watering," he says.

The Hobbit Garden is at 9400 Sauls Road in Raleigh and open for individual or group tours, by appointment only, 8 a.m.–6 p.m. Contact the garden by e-mail: hobbitgarden@att.net. Cost is \$10 per person.

JOHN'S DESIGN TIPS & TRICKS

↪ When selecting a tree for a site, don't overlook the subterranean element. People tend to focus on how wide the canopy spreads or how tall a shrub or tree grows, overlooking the issue of root spread. Traveling roots can encroach on house foundations and neighboring properties, and interfere with underground water, sewer or gas lines. They may also compete for food and moisture with other plants you'd like to include in your design.

↪ Choose combinations of plants that make the garden inviting through all four seasons. A marriage of deciduous and evergreen trees in the landscape adds balance and year-round interest. Consider the texture, color, size, fragrance and shape of all the plant's parts.

↪ If you've just moved to a new property, "live with it for a while" before launching a wholesale installation of plants or redesign. Notice, over time, what areas tend to retain moisture and which are drought-sensitive. Pay attention to the areas that have greatest exposure to wind, sun and shade.

↪ Use a large plant to open up a small space and serve as a focal point, rather than completely packing a small space with small plants.

↪ Use contrast. For example, include delicate plants in front of a large stone wall. Or plant a fine-leaved ground-cover around the trunk of a massive old tree.

↪ Incorporate something of visual interest beyond your property line into your design. This might include a steeple, wall, hillside or tree line.

WILLIE'S QUICK PICKS FOR CONIFERS

↪ Japanese plum yew (*Cephalotaxus harringtonia*). Tolerant of full sun and partial shade and generally slow-growing. 'Fastigiata' and 'Korean Gold' are excellent upright growth forms.

↪ Japanese cedar (*Cryptomeria japonica*). Very tough, tolerating a wide variety of environmental conditions. Many commercial varieties are suitable for small gardens.

↪ Norway spruce (*Picea abies*). Tolerant of full sun or shade. A variety of dwarf, slender-profile and miniature growth forms are available.

↪ Eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*). A hardy native, growing large in the wild. Has gnarled, gray trunks that are architecturally interesting. 'Grey Owl' is a low spreader. 'Pendula' is a tall, weeping form. 🌱



TOP: The perennial St. John's wort, *Hypericum androsaemum* 'Albury purple', provides interest well after flowering with its purplish leaves and berries.

MIDDLE: The Hobbit Garden is screened from the road by a diverse collection of evergreens. Dawn redwood towers above a row of Chinese junipers, skirted by low-growing shrubs like *Abelia*, boxwood, nandinas, holly and Japanese barberry.

BOTTOM: This *Camellia sasanqua* is part of a vast Hobbit Garden collection of camellia species and varieties in bloom from October through April.

Drought? Sun? Bring it On!

Plants that do well in drought conditions

BY CARLA BURGESS

For low-maintenance annuals that deliver a riot of bloom, you can't go wrong with these oldies and newbies. Mass them in the landscape or plant them in pots in a sunny location, and get ready for a spring-through-fall flowerthon. All of these selections are exceptionally drought-tolerant, though you'll want to water regularly for a few weeks after planting until roots become established (containers will require more frequent watering).

A WINNING AFRICAN DAISY

Osteospermum 'Asti White' cinched the 2008 All-America Selections bedding plant award. It has pure-white, 2- to 2½-inch flowers with blue eyes borne on neat, compact plants about 20 inches tall and wide. It is the first white African daisy that can be propagated from seed—17 weeks from sowing to flowering. If you're too impatient, look for this and other *Osteospermum* varieties on shelves this spring.



African daisy *Osteospermum* 'Asti White'

DIAMOND FROST

Euphorbia 'Diamond Frost' seems like the plant world's equivalent of the new "it" girl. Mark Weathington, assistant director of the J.C. Raulston Arboretum in Raleigh, raved about its ever-blooming performance in the clench of the drought last year. With its clouds of tiny, white flowers amid airy foliage, 'Diamond Frost' is reminiscent of baby's breath. It's about 20 inches tall and just as wide. It's charming in groups, in containers, or tucked among other annuals or perennials. No deadheading required—looks great from start to finish!



Euphorbia 'Diamond Frost'

ZINNIAS A'PLENTY

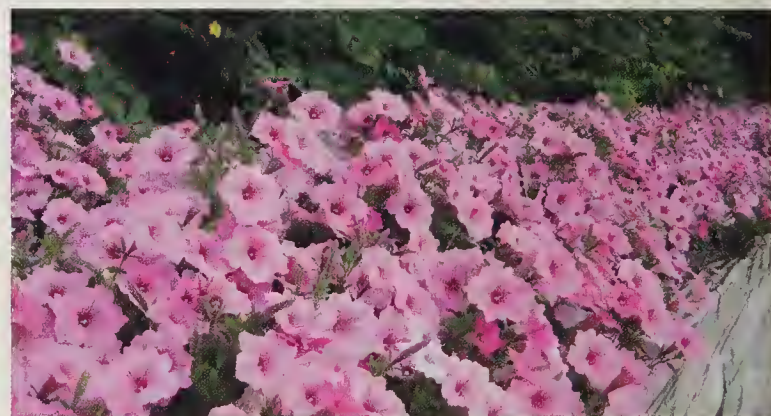
The 'Profusion' hybrid zinnia series has been snagging awards for almost a decade. 'Cherry' (pictured), 'White' and 'Orange' are past AAS Gold Medal winners. Cheery, 2-inch flowers are borne atop a neat mound of foliage about 15 inches tall and wide. As you'd imagine, these zinnias bloom profusely and are excellent landscaping annuals in well-drained soil. Unlike many zinnias, these are resistant to mildew and handle heat, humidity and drought with finesse.



'Profusion' hybrid zinnia series, 'Cherry'

PETUNIA HEAVEN

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Carla Burgess can be reached at ncgardenshare@mindspring.com.

For more gardening advice, go to the "Carolina Gardens" section of www.carolinacountry.com.

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"THE STUFF" WITH PRODUCE

My son Isaac is the most precious and loving child God could have ever given to my husband and me. He loves the outdoors. Anything involving dirt just makes it better. Isaac thought he was "The Stuff" planting and gathering from the garden last summer. He was so proud of the cantaloupes he grew, and the tomatoes could hardly turn ripe before he would be pulling them. Isaac and our daughter, Zoe, have made us stop and look at how our time is spent each day. Take the time to teach your children how to garden, can and freeze produce. You will be so glad you had the time together.

*Melissa Watts, Indian Trail,
Union Power Cooperative*



CALDWELL CLAY

My family grows pesticide-free vegetables in a small garden patch we carved out of the red clay of southern Caldwell County. Pictured here are my husband, John, and son, Jackson, as they cultivate their "field of dreams."

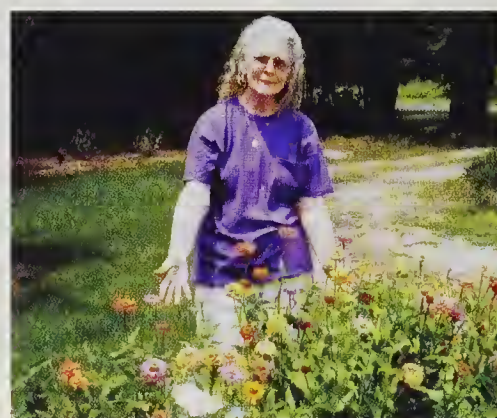
Candance Tippet, Granite Falls, Blue Ridge



THE TEACHER GETS HER PICK

It was such a dry time in 2007, but I was blessed with a wonderful garden. I used my water barrel and had most of my garden papered. The lady in this picture taught me how good cucumber sandwiches were. She always gets her pick from my garden.

Nancy Stanley, Roaring River, Surry-Yadkin



PEGGY'S ARRAY

A special friend, Peggy Norwood, has the most beautiful flowers. Flowers tend to volunteer for her and spring up everywhere! Her yard has the array of rainbow colors that splash joy on all who visit her. The hummingbirds and butterflies that come for quick visits are a sight to behold. She and her flowers truly bloom wherever God has planted them, touched by the Master Gardener. This is a picture of Peggy with her beautiful zinnias.

Pam Hursey, Wake Forest, Wake Electric



ON THE CONEFLOWER

We are relatively new to North Carolina, and have learned that a pickax is a useful garden tool. Through hard labor (my husband's) and perseverance (mine, as in "Please let's get that plant!"), we have managed to develop several gardens.

The columbine had big blossoms that seemed to dance, the amaryllis made a regal entrance, and the sunflower was dazzling. Perhaps my favorite picture, though, is of this bee busily gathering from the coneflower.

Eve Deibel, Denver, EnergyUnited



Thanks to everyone who sent pictures of your gardens.

You can see more on our Web site. Next month we'll publish pictures of your North Carolina vacations. [Deadline was Feb. 15.] For more themes and rules of our "Nothing Could Be Finer" series, see page 23.



THEIR FIRST PLANTING

My son and niece had their very first lesson on gardening from my sister-in-law Tara. One afternoon early in March, she came home from work toting several flats of cheery petunias, their color punctuating the end of winter, and a couple bags of luscious potting soil. The toddlers attentively and patiently listened to the planting process like racehorses chomping at the bit. After they were set loose to put their lesson into practice, they planted uncomplaining petunias into pots, mostly roots down. After they enthusiastically watered the flowers, and a great many other objects, the two budding gardeners admired and discussed their work over juice boxes and Cheerios.

Margarita Galvan, Creedmoor, Wake Electric

FIRST TENANTS

In September 2006 our family moved from Augsburg, Germany, to the Seven Lakes area in North Carolina. We



immediately fell in love with the beautiful nature around us and started to take care of our garden.

When unpacking the moving boxes we discovered a little colorful bird-house which we had bought in a tiny garden shop in the Bavarian countryside shortly before we left. We decided to hang it up and put it "on the market for rent." Shortly after we had the "open house" a young couple moved in and made themselves comfortable. What a joy when we found out they started a family. Isn't nature just great?

*Carmen and Sven Schaefer,
Seven Lakes, Randolph EMC*



IF YOU DIG IT, IT WILL GROW

My husband and I were devastated when our septic lines needed to be rerouted through our beloved garden space. As the planting season arrived, workers destroyed our manure-rich soil with rock-hard red dirt. It was discouraging to say the least.

As Denny planted our sunflowers over the new septic lines, I doubted that anything would grow. The evidence is in the picture! We were blessed to watch our destroyed yard turned into a breathtaking flower garden.

Jennifer Heim, Dudley, Tri-County




"YOU LET THIS ONE GET TOO BIG"

In August 7, 1977, my family and I took a three-week trip to California. That meant we had to have somebody to look after our garden. My neighbor is a city slicker and knows little about farming. I told him to keep everything he picked and not let anything get too big.

On the way home, we picked up a 110-pound watermelon. I snuck it into my garden that night.

The next morning, I pushed my wheelbarrow to the garden and loaded it on. Then I called my neighbor to my garden and said, "You let this one get too big."

He believed me. The next three days he brought people over to see it.

The one in the picture I did raise a few years later and it weighed 141 pounds, my record. 

Talmadge Meads, Elizabeth City, Albemarle

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1. Approximately 200 words or less.
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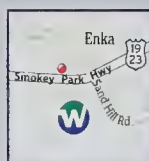
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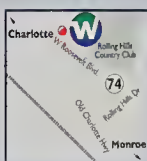
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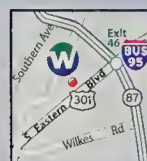
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Compost

Yard and kitchen scraps can turn a garden to gold

BY KRIS WETHERBEE

By turning organic waste into nutrient-rich compost, you can fertilize, mulch, prevent weeds and add organic matter all in one easy step. Compost is a mix of biodegradable yard and kitchen waste that decompose into a dark and nutrient-rich, soil-like substance through a combination of biological and chemical processes. The organic waste serves as food and energy sources for a diversity of soil-dwelling microorganisms such as bacteria, fungi, earthworms and other beneficial creatures that break down the organic material into a well-rotted, fiber-rich humus known as compost.

INGREDIENTS TO SUCCESS

Like any good recipe, the right ingredients and cooking method are essential to creating a great-tasting meal—whether that meal is for humans or microbes. In the case of compost, the ingredients consist of nitrogen- and carbon-rich organic wastes, soil, water, and air.

Organic wastes comprise a combination of “green” (nitrogen sources) and “brown” (carbon sources) materials. Good green sources include grass clippings, green leaves and plant material, animal or human hair, animal manure and kitchen waste, such as fruit and vegetable scraps, eggshells, coffee grounds and tea bags. Brown sources can be found in woody materials, such as garden trimmings, dry leaves, pine needles, straw, wood chips and sawdust, shredded paper products and used potting soil.

Do not add animal fat, meat, bones, dyed human hair, colored or glossy paper products, chemically treated wood products, pet or human wastes, noxious weeds or diseased plant parts.

A small amount of garden soil helps introduce the microorganisms needed to break down the organic matter. Adequate moisture and air—introduced via woody material and/or by turning the pile—are essential so the microbes can live and multiply, which makes for better and faster composting.

BUILDING A PILE

You’ll save time and energy if you locate the pile close to your major source of organic material or where you’ll be using the compost. Make sure the area is somewhat level, well-drained and easily accessible.

The method for cultivating compost is the same whether it’s created in ready-made bins purchased from a gardening center or in bins you make yourself.

Always build your pile, or add ingredients, in alternating layers of three parts carbon material (brown) to one part nitrogen (green), with a thin layer of soil in between each addition.

Whenever you start a new pile, use a coarse material like branches or twigs to start the bottom layer. Add layers until

your bin is almost full, then top it off with a 4- to 6-inch layer of carbon (brown) material.

It helps to break, cut, chop or shred anything that is large or easily mats: tree branches, corn stalks, watermelon rinds, leaves, etc.

A container or enclosure of some type will help define your composting area and keep materials from being scattered. A homemade bin should be at least 3 feet wide by 3 feet high by 3 feet deep. A three-sided bin can be made from a variety of materials, such as straw bales, cinder blocks, old pallets or flexible wire panels.

Compost tumblers provide clean and odor-free composting in a drum-shaped container that you either crank, turn or roll to aerate the pile. Bins are available at garden centers and home improvement stores. For first-class tumbling that is easy to load up and turn, Gardener’s Supply Co. (www.gardeners.com) offers a Tumbling Compost Mixer. Find more tumblers and bins at www.composters.com.

TURNING GARBAGE TO GOLD

Water is a vital element of a well-functioning pile. Too much or too little moisture can put a halt to the decomposition process. Be sure to test the moisture of your “compost in progress” by grabbing a handful every now and squeezing it. The material should feel moist but not wet.

Whether you turn a pile often or not at all is entirely up to you. You might have compost in four to six weeks if you turn the pile daily, or it might take up to a year if you don’t turn the pile at all.

Once the compost process gets under way, the pile heats up and begins to settle. (Temperatures can reach between 110 and 150 degrees Fahrenheit.) Your compost is ready to use when the interior of the pile is no longer hot and the remaining soil-like substance is dark and crumbly with a rich earthy smell.

Mature compost can be used as a soil amendment or high-quality mulch in flower beds, vegetables gardens, in landscapes or on lawns. Because it acts like a slow-release fertilizer, you can use compost to nourish transplants and seedlings, as well as outdoor container plants and indoor houseplants. 🌱

Kris Wetherbee is a writer and gardener in Oregon.



A container or enclosure of some type will help define your composting area.

Flower Power

When it comes to early spring planting, these plants are raring to go

BY KRIS WETHERBEE

Knowing which plants make good candidates for early spring planting is a major step to getting a jump on the season. But making sure that your new plant purchases have been properly “hardened off”—a term used to describe plants that have been gradually exposed to outdoor conditions—can make the difference between a plant that flourishes or one that goes into distress.

GREAT PICKS

Most plants can go in the ground once the threat of a killing frost has passed, though bareroot trees and shrubs are best transplanted in late winter while they are still dormant. As a general rule, if it's available at your local nursery or garden center it's probably safe to plant. For some great picks for early spring planting, check out these eight hardy favorites.

Azalea (*Rhododendron* spp.): Long-lived, easy-to-grow evergreen and deciduous shrubs with large, fragrant spring blooms perfect for the partly shaded garden. Does best in a cool, moist organic soil.

Bee Balm (*Monarda didyma*): Long-blooming summer flowers ranging in color from red to mahogany and pink to lavender grow atop upright stems from 2 to 4 feet tall. Slightly hairy leaves smell somewhat of mint and basil, and when brewed as tea, make a tasty beverage. Best grown in full sun to light shade and moist, well-drained soil.

Hardy Geranium (*Geranium* spp.): Also known as cranesbill, this group of summer-blooming perennials are a standard in European gardens. This perpetual bloomer with colors in blue, pink, purple, magenta, bluish-rose, and white appreciates moist, well-drained soil in a sunny location with afternoon shade where summers are hot.

Hollyhock (*Alcea rosea*): Cottage garden favorite from the Mediterranean region with beautiful single, semidouble, or double flowers in summer in a wide range of colors. This self-sowing, short-lived perennial thrives in sunny to partially



shady locations and moist, rich and well-drained soil.

Japanese Spirea (*Spiraea japonica*):

Upright shrub growing 2 to 6 feet tall and wide, with pink to red blooms in summer to fall. Popular cultivars growing 2 to 3 feet tall include ‘Goldflame’ with red flowers and yellow-green foliage changing to reddish-orange

in fall; ‘Goldmound’ with pink flowers and golden foliage maturing to yellow-green; and ‘Shirobana’, with red buds opening to a bi-colored sensation of pink and white. Thrives in full sun to light shade in fertile, moderate to moist soil.

Moss Phlox (*Phlox subulata*): Late spring to early summer blooming perennial growing to 6 inches tall, with brilliant blooms that cover the ground in bright carpets of color in shades of pale to deep pink, lavender or white. Dark green foliage is evergreen to semi-evergreen with needlelike leaves. Grows best in full sun and average but well-drained soil with moderate moisture.

Purple Coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*): Daisy-like flowers appearing in summer in shades of pink to lavender and rose, followed by attractive autumn seedheads enjoyed by many birds. Flowering stems rise from 3 to 4 feet tall also make a wonderful fresh cut flower for arranging in a vase. Somewhat drought-tolerant once established. Grows best in full sun to light shade and well-drained, humus rich soil.

Rose (*Rosa* spp.): This classic flowering shrub—available as bareroot plants in early spring, or later, in containers—comes in a wide range of sizes, forms, and bloom color. There are hundreds of terrific varieties of groundcover, shrub, and vining roses from old-fashioned favorites to modern day cultivars. Redleaf rose (*Rosa glauca*) is a hardy shrub with arching dark purple-red stems and deep pink flowers set off by bluish gray foliage. Most roses grow best in a sunny to lightly shaded location with good air circulation and moderately fertile and moist, but well-drained soil. 🌱

Kris Wetherbee is a writer and gardener in Oregon.

Planting in Summer's Heat

Don't let the heat of summer keep you from adding plants to your garden

BY KRIS WETHERBEE

A misconception about gardening is that you should never plant during summer when it's hot. But this only applies when transplanting or dividing.

As daily temperatures rise, you still can continue to fill the empty spaces in your garden with potted perennials, annuals and shrubs. Any shock from transplanting is essentially eliminated because you didn't actually dig up the plant.

FINDING THE RIGHT SPOT

One of the great things about planting in summer is that most plants are in their full flush of growth—allowing you to see its form and the color of its foliage or flowers.

Anytime a plant goes into the ground, you should match the plant's growth habits to the garden site. This is true in any season, but especially in summer when temperatures are more extreme. A plant that prefers part shade but tolerates full sun has a better chance of surviving in full sun if it's planted in spring rather than summer. That way the roots have enough time to establish themselves before the heat of summer erupts. When planted in full sun on a hot summer day, the plant might wilt before it has a chance to situate its roots. In this case, you still can plant in summer by giving the plant what it prefers—a partly shady location.

When planting in a sunny location, another way to protect the plant is to provide temporary shade for the first week or two using a light-colored umbrella or shade cloth.

For best results, always plant on a cloudy day or in the cooler temperatures of the early evening to minimize weather-related plant stress.

AFTER THE FACT

Give your plants the advantage over summer's heat by applying a 2- to 3-inch layer of organic mulch—such as compost, shredded leaves, cocoa bean hulls or bark dust—immediately after planting. This will help conserve soil moisture and keep down weeds, which compete for water and nutrients whether your soil is loamy, sandy or clay.

Water new plantings once or twice with a dilute solution of fish emulsion or liquid seaweed to help them quickly settle into their new environment.

During the first week or so, you might need to water daily or every other day depending on the weather, soil type and plant's growing requirements. After that, it's important to



keep the soil slightly moist until the plant becomes established in the garden. For most perennials and shrubs, that usually occurs after the first growing season.

The key is to water deeply and thoroughly to encourage a deeper root system.

WHAT TO PLANT

Just about anything growing in a container can be planted in summer, though some plants stand up to summer's heat better than others.

Standout shrubs: Barberry, boxwood, bluebeard, chaste tree, clethra, coto-neaster, holly, honeysuckle, hydrangea, Japanese plum yew, juniper, rose, santolina, spiraea

Persistent perennials: Japanese anemone, artemisia, aster, catmint, chrysanthemum, coreopsis, daylily, echinacea, geranium, goldenrod, helenium, liatris, ornamental grasses, phlox, plumbago, Russian sage, salvia, sedum, verbena, veronica, yarrow

Late-color annuals: Celosia, chrysanthemums, coleus, cosmos, creeping zinnia, dusty miller, dwarf sunflowers, globe amaranth, impatiens, marigolds, nasturtiums, salvia, scaevola, zinnia

CONQUER AND DIVIDE

An easy way to find new plants for the empty spaces in your yard is to divide certain perennials that already exist in your garden.

September is a great time to dig in and divide perennials, such as asters, chrysanthemums, daylilies, iris, liatris, rudbeckias, and ornamental grasses. Divide and replant perennials with vigorous clumps, barren or dead centers, and those whose flowers have become smaller or less abundant.

The steps are basically the same whether the plant grows from rhizomes, such as iris, has tuberous roots, such as daylilies, or are more fibrous, such as rudbeckia.

Dig up the plant on a cloudy day, keeping as much of the roots intact as possible. Remove any loose soil so you can see the crown and roots, then divide the plant into smaller clumps using a sharp spade or sturdy knife, discarding any dead centers to the compost pile.

Each division should have at least two to five vigorous shoots with ample roots attached. Cut back remaining foliage to half the plant's height, then immediately replant the divided pieces into their new location.

Any extras can be planted in potting soil in large pots and later given as gifts to friends and family. 🌱

Kris Wetherbee is a writer and gardener in Oregon.

How to Grow a Straw Bale Garden

BY KENT ROGERS

Kent Rogers of Wake Forest has successfully cultivated a vegetable garden in bales of straw. Kent points out that the method produces good-looking, healthy plants without weeds, and is especially convenient for people who don't have a large plot of ground to till, or who are physically unable to do a lot of kneeling, bending, raking and hoeing.

Here is some of his advice for people interested in straw bale gardening. Kent is a member of Wake Electric, a Touchstone Energy cooperative. You can contact him by mail at 13028 Powell Rd, Wake Forest, NC 27587, and by e-mail at kent.rogers@earthlink.net

I have learned that wheat straw bales are the best. Pine straw won't work. Get bales that are tightly tied with synthetic twine if you can find it. Synthetic twine won't rot and it will hold the bales together longer. If the bales use regular twine, you may have to put a stake at the end to hold it together. I have paid about \$2.50 each for bales.

I arrange 10 bales per row, so they can hold each other together. Orient bales with the strings off the ground to make transplanting easier.

If you make more than one row of bales, put them wide enough apart so your lawnmower can get between them. And because you'll be watering them, place bales where the water will drain away.

You can use seeds if you add some topsoil on top of the bales. I transplant my vegetables from flats and trays directly into the bales.

PREPARE YOUR BALES

It takes 10 days to prepare your bales.

Days 1–3: Water the bales thoroughly and keep them wet.

Days 4–6: Sprinkle the bales with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of ammonium



The large squash is a trombocino—it grew to 5 feet, 5 inches tall and weighed 16 pounds before I finally cut it off the vine.

I planted these red potatoes in the previous year's straw. Such beautiful potatoes—not a speck of dirt on them.

nitrate (32-0-0) per bale per day and water it well.

Days 7–9: Cut back to $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of ammonium nitrate per bale per day and continue to water it in well.

Day 10: No more ammonium nitrate, but do add 1 cup of 10-10-10 fertilizer per bale and water it in well.

Day 11: Transplant your plants into the bales. I used a spatula to make a crack in the bale for each plant. Place the plant down to its first leaf and close the crack back together as best you can.

WHAT TO PLANT & HOW TO CARE FOR IT

How many plants per bale? Try 2 tomato plants per bale, 3 peppers, 2 squash, 2 sets of cucumbers.

Be prepared to stake the tomatoes and peppers. I recommend 6-foot stakes for the tomatoes.

If you plant okra, you'll have to stake them, too.

Corn plants will be too top-heavy.

Water the bales in the morning and after sunset. You can't over-water because any excess will just run out of the bales. Soaker hoses will work. Do not let bales get dried out.

I started out using some Miracle Grow once a week for a couple of weeks. Then I sprinkled in some 10-10-10. Don't over fertilize.

The bales themselves will start to sprout, but that is no problem. I give

my bales a "haircut" every so often with a knife.

I have not had to spray my plants with any pesticides. I haven't had any worms, bugs or other pests. Maybe it has something to do with the plants being off the ground.

At season's end you can use the bales for mulch or bust them up and set new bales on them next year.

RESOURCES

Here are some Web links to articles:

www.nicholsgardennursery.com/strawbales.htm

www.county.ces.uga.edu/chatham/hay_bales.htm

www.co.clay.mn.us/Depts/Extensio/ExAPHydr.htm 

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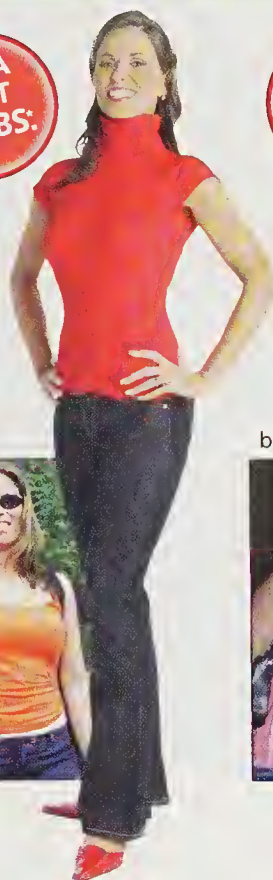
**JULIE
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23 LBS.**



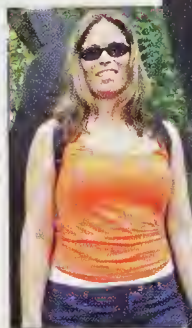
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**CARA
LOST
30 LBS.**



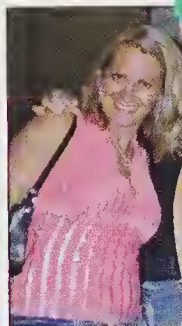
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**SYNETHA
LOST
22 LBS.**



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**AMY
LOST
23 LBS.**



before



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A NEW Tale to Tell

The Storytelling Arts Center of the Southeast

By Lisa Canada

Using mime, poetry, song, humor and vivid characterizations, Len Cabral is a popular storyteller at festivals and theaters around the country and will be part of the Laurinburg festival April 26–27.

There was a time when evenings were spent on the front porch or in the front room listening to a story. Maybe it was Grandma, maybe an uncle, or maybe someone else entirely. The only things that mattered were the story being told and the person telling it.

Over time those stories were replaced by radio and then television and now the computer, too. And that generation of folks who could capture your imagination and take you to places far from your own piece of land has all but gone.

But some of those stories still exist, and there are still people who tell them. Storytelling is back.

"There's been a resurgence not just in our country but across the world," says Brenda Gilbert, a storyteller and one of the founders of the Storytelling Arts Center of the Southeast (SACS).

It was this resurgence that Gilbert and SACS co-founder Jan Schmidt wanted to capture and carry to southeastern North Carolina and the entire Southeast. Schmidt, a former school librarian, and Gilbert, a retired school

administrator, attended the national storytelling festival in Tennessee. Later they decided to try to acknowledge and build up what they knew already existed in the southeastern states: a love of and talent for storytelling. They founded SACS and kicked off the Storytelling Festival of Carolina, a spring event that brings national and regional storytellers together in Scotland County.


"Our regional cultures and the stories they hold are too important—and too fun—to let pass away," says Schmidt.

Scotland County is one of the most racially balanced counties in the U.S. Ten percent of the county's residents are Lumbee Indians, 40 percent are African Americans, and 50 percent are white. Remarkably, all three of these cultures—while historically very different—have storytelling traditions.

Native Americans communicated history, genealogy and spirituality through songs, dance and spoken words. Scottish immigrants, the next wave of residents to settle the area, brought the European tradition of tales told through spoken words and song, in particular the ballad.

African slaves shared news, spiritual support, and advice for finding freedom through spoken words and songs.

Protecting and celebrating these storytelling traditions are central to the mission of the Storytelling Arts Center of the Southeast: to preserve and enrich storytelling arts for all ages through performances, research, workshops and writing. The Storytelling Arts Center provides a venue for Youthful Voices, based on a national program that promotes storytelling as an art form for children. SACS also sponsors a regional Storytelling Guild and has started collecting oral histories.

Nationally known storytellers associated with the center include Donald Davis, Diane Ferlatte, Len Cabral and Jay O'Callahan. Regional tellers include Tyris Jones, Brenda Gilbert, Gwen Rainer and Kat Littleturtle. 

The 2nd annual Storytelling Festival of Carolina will be held at the Historic John Blue House in Laurinburg April 26–27. The house is at 13040 X-Way Road, Laurinburg, NC 28352. For more information call (910) 291-0929.

HYDROXATONE®
HEALTHNEWS

Erase Wrinkles Without Botox®*

Breakthrough anti-aging cream combines three scientifically advanced wrinkle-reducing ingredients to rival the results of Botox®.*

In recent years Botox®* has been promoted as the leader of anti-wrinkle treatments. Although it can be successful, it is very expensive, painful, must be administered by a physician, and, in many cases, two to three treatments are needed for the desired corrections. After years of research and testing, a new safe, more affordable product offering comparable results is now available.

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Matrixyl™ 3000†	YES	NO	NO
Hyaluronic Acid	YES	NO	NO

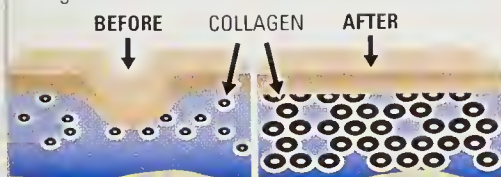
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Hydroxatone® is unlike any other skin cream you've ever tried because it

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- Enhanced production of healthy, radiant new skin
- Tightened and toned skin



Matrixyl™ 3000†—is clinically proven to promote collagen production in the skin.

Argireline®§—is a combination of amino acids formulated to relax facial wrinkles, reduce the degree of existing wrinkles and stop their future development.

Hyaluronic Acid—is virtually unmatched in hydrating the skin, resulting in increased smoothness, softening, elasticity and decreased facial wrinkles.



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"Within two weeks of using Hydroxatone®, I was getting compliments on my skin from friends and co-workers. My skin not only feels great, but it looks great too! You've made me a Hydroxatone® believer!"

— Robin B., Los Angeles

Results not typical

relies on THREE proven ingredients for REAL results. Matrixyl™ 3000† is clinically proven to promote collagen production in the skin. Collagen is the most powerful substance known to help keep skin stay young, soft and vibrant. Argireline®§ is a combination of amino acids formulated to relax facial wrinkles, reduce the degree of existing wrinkles and stop their future development. And Hyaluronic Acid is virtually unmatched in hydrating the skin, resulting in increased smoothness, softening, elasticity and decreased facial wrinkles. But Hydroxatone® doesn't stop there! It also includes other natural antioxidants, botanicals, vitamins, and peptides and a gentle but powerful exfoliant...all to nourish your skin while fading wrinkles.

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Herring fresh off the boat at the dock on the banks of the Roanoke River in Jamesville, N.C.

WILL HERRING *run again?*

The annual spring run of herring in northeastern North Carolina has slowed to a stroll. But hope stays alive that the beloved fish will become bountiful again some day.

Text and photos by Donna Campbell Smith

The spring ritual of herring fishing was first introduced to me in 1965 by my boyfriend. He picked me up one afternoon with a peculiar looking net tied to the top of his car, and we drove to Lake Phelps, near Creswell in Washington County. A network of canals, dug by slaves in the 16th century to irrigate the rich black lands of the area, radiate from the lake. Through the centuries blueback herring, also known as river herring, have found their way from the Atlantic Ocean, through rivers, creeks and canals to spawn in the lakes and the sounds of coastal North Carolina. Those that survive return to the sea. The young fish wait until the following fall to make their exodus to the Atlantic Ocean.

I was exposed to fishing trips all my life, Mama having been an avid angler. I supposed the fishing poles and tackle box must be in the trunk of my date's car. What I soon learned was that herring fishing and fishing poles had little in common. Instead of using a hook and line, herring are scooped up in nets as they swim in schools through the narrow parts of creeks and canals.

Until this fishing excursion with my high school boyfriend, my earliest knowledge of herring was the pungent odor of frying salted herrings wafting throughout my grandfather's house whenever my aunt cooked them for his breakfast. Papa Tom also enjoyed a

breakfast of scrambled eggs and herring roe. Herring roe is the sack of eggs found in the female herring, and is considered by locals to be the North Carolinian's caviar.

HERRING HISTORY

The tradition of spring herring fishing goes back long before the first European settlers arrived on the shores of the Carolina coast. American Indians fished the coastal waters for thousands of years before their arrival. The native fishermen taught the newcomers how to make nets woven from plant materials, and how to use traps called weirs that are still incorporated by today's commercial herring fishermen. The bow and dip nets of ancient times are made from more modern materials, but follow the same pattern as those used by Indians long ago and many recreational fishermen still use them to catch herring. My boyfriend fashioned his net by bowing a long piece of pliable metal tubing to make a loop. Then he attached chicken wire to the frame to make the net. It looked like a giant tea strainer. Some nets were simply a big chicken wire basket with a cord attached. When the fish swam into the net and the fisherman felt them bump he just yanked the net out of the water by the cord.

Herrings were preserved in the old days by packing them in salt brine or pickling them in a vinegar and spice

concoction. Before cooking them, the fish must be soaked overnight in fresh water to take out the saltiness, changing the water at least twice. The fish are then rolled in meal and fried in hot lard. Herring have many fine bones and are eaten bones and all. Fresh herring are fried the same way, but after cleaning the fish the sides are notched every half an inch down the length to ensure the fish are cooked through and the bones can be eaten.

NORTH CAROLINA HERRING

Herring have made a small eatery called Cypress Grill in the Martin County town of Jamesville famous nationwide. They are only open a few months a year, usually January through April, while the herring are running. Jamesville has revered the river herring with a festival in their honor every Easter Monday for more than 60 years. According to an interview with Mr. Tee Wee Blount of Jamesville in an article by Janet Simpson and Michael Williams, the tradition of going to

Jamesville on Easter Monday began in the early 1900s. Easter Monday was a holiday, and people had the day off. They gathered in Jamesville at the fishery to buy herring and corn. Those preserved herring were a matter of survival for some families according to Mr. Blount. Even if some folks were not in the market for a barrel of herring, they liked to hang around and watch the activity at the fishery. It was in the 1950s that the local Ruritan Club decided to organize a festival, and the Easter Monday Herring Festival was born. Today the event includes a parade, carnival rides, vendors selling arts and crafts and food, and of course plates of fried herring and roe. People still watch the fishery activities as boats bring in their catch for the day.

From the 1800s until recently, commercial fisheries along the eastern region of our state provided herring to people throughout the country and abroad. The commercial fishermen used pound nets hung on poles, stretching the nets across the

river. These nets "herded" the fish into traps like the weirs used by Native Americans centuries ago. In the Washington County and Martin County area there were five fisheries, two in Plymouth, one at Cam Point between Plymouth and Jamesville, and two in Jamesville. During the herring runs in the mid-20th century as many as 75,000 fish could be caught and processed in the fisheries per day. This was also true of other counties up and down the Carolina coast.

Even in the 1960s locals were noticing a reduction in the size of the herring run. Stories of nets so full of fish it took more than one person to drag them out of the water were common in the old days, but rare by then. When I was introduced to the art of fishing for herring the catch was somewhat disappointing. My boyfriend dropped the net into the dark canal water. We waited a

continued on page 34

The Herring Queen's float in the Easter Monday Herring Festival Parade, Jamesville.






while and sure enough I saw the net quiver. We pulled it out to find a dozen or so wiggling fish trapped in the bottom of the net. Not a great catch by the usual standard, but plenty for us to cook over a fire on the canal bank.

Some folks were already complaining then, that the corporate farms surrounding the state park were changing the environment by not opening the canal locks and allowing the fish to gain entry to their Lake Phelps spawning ground. Locals saw this as the reason for the smaller catches. As the years have gone by, the herring have all but stopped traveling up the tributaries of eastern North Carolina, and biologists are not sure why. One reason may be that the locks and dams built to control the flow of water have hindered their route to the lakes and sounds for spawning, breaking the cycle. But, biologists think a combination of over-fishing, both on a local level and by oceanic fisheries, along with pollution and habitat loss can account for the herring's demise.

The problem of over-fishing started long before the 1960s. According to an article by Jim Wilson titled "Fish of Yesterday, Fish of Tomorrow," which appeared in the last October's issue of *Wildlife in North Carolina*, as early as 1905 a law was passed mandating fishermen leave a channel in the Albemarle Sound for migrating fish. That was because Albemarle Sound was filled with pound nets. And even before the 20th century shad was being restocked in the Albemarle in an attempt to replenish that fish population.

In any case, on March 2, 2006, the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission voted to ban the harvest of herring in the rivers, creeks and streams of eastern North Carolina. It is now unlawful to possess herring over six inches long. Some doubt the moratorium will save the herring at all, others warn it is going to take a long time, 10 to 15 years.

From that spring in 1965, when I tasted my first herring cooked on the bank of a canal, hardly a spring has passed that I have not enjoyed a mess of fried herring and roe. I fear I might have enjoyed herring for the last time. Organizers of Jamesville's Easter Monday Herring Festival say the festival will go on, herrings or no herrings, and Cypress Grill may have to offer a substitute menu. Some have the nagging feeling that we have seen the end of an era; that the "herring runs" are a thing of the past, leaving us with only the memories. 

Donna Campbell Smith is a Carolina Country contributing writer who lives in Wake Forest. She wrote about mules in the February magazine.

Top left: Easter Monday Herring Festival vendors sell fried herring plates in front of the Old Post Office Building.

Bottom left: Herring are fried crispy and eaten "bones and all."

Right: Fried herring vendors at Jamesville's Easter Monday Herring Festival.

Fried Fresh Herring

- 6 fresh herring
- Bacon drippings
- 1 tablespoon margarine
- Salt and pepper
- ¼–½ cup white cornmeal

Scale and clean herring, removing heads. Soak for ½ hour in cold water to which 1 tablespoon salt has been added. Wash fish under cold running water. Pat dry. Sprinkle with salt. Heat bacon drippings in electric fryer to 380 degrees. Add margarine just before putting fish in.

Put cornmeal in paper bag. Add ¼-teaspoon pepper. Shake each fish in cornmeal, put in hot fat, cover and cook 10 minutes on each side until golden brown and crispy (time may vary). Drain on paper towels; keep hot on heated platter. Serves 4 to 6

Serve with coleslaw, boiled potatoes and good cornbread.

Herring Roe and Scrambled Eggs

- 6 strips bacon
- 1 8-ounce can herring roe drained, or 1 cup chopped cooked fresh roe
- 2 tablespoons bacon drippings
- 6 eggs
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper

Fry bacon, drain on paper towels, keep warm in oven. Pour off and reserve drippings. In same fryer, put 2 tablespoons bacon grease, add roe, salt and pepper. Brown slightly. Beat eggs. Add salt and pepper. Add 2 teaspoons bacon grease to browned roe, pour in eggs and mix scrambled roe and eggs. Cook until eggs are partially done. Remove from heat, cover for a minute. Serve immediately topped with bacon. Serves 4 to 6.

Recipes courtesy of Eddy Browning, food columnist for the Washington Daily News

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YOU KNOW YOU'RE FROM

Carolina country if...

...your pop bought you *a dibby for Easter*, and when it grew up it was a rooster that chased Mama every time she went outside to do laundry.

From Susan Beaver, Polkville



Warren Kessler

From Susan Beaver, Polkville

- ... You and your friends ate sour grass in the summer and hoped Granny did not see you or she would fuss about the dog peeing on the grass to make it sour.
- ... In winter, you made a playhouse in the house with a blanket and two straight chairs.
- ... In summer, you made a playhouse with sawhorses and an old wooden door.
- ... In summer, Granny sent you out to play after breakfast and you did not come back in until dark.
- ... Supper always included pintos, fried taters and hoecake bread.
- ... Granny always made rice puddin' with leftover rice.
- ... When the state black-topped your road, you wrote all over it with chalk.
- ... The oak tree on the road had such a big knot-hole you used it as a mailbox and put notes to your friends in it.
- ... When you walked in the pasture, your cousin stepped in a yellow-jacket nest and you all ran to the house, and some even ran right through the barbed wire fence you scaled earlier.
- ... There were too many to fit in the truck to go to Granny's, so you piled into the back of the truck.

From Fred Kilpatrick, Murphy

- ... You made your slingshot from a forked stick, inner tube rubber and a leather shoe tongue.
- ... You used crab apples to shoot eating apples from the apple trees, and one day a chickadee fell to the ground instead.
- ... You set your fishing poles while hoeing corn.
- ... Your sisters would take their True Story magazine to the cornfield, hoe four or five rounds, then stop to rest and read some.
- ... Your neighbor bought a gallon of gas for 25 cents, drove to town, then drove back and bought another gallon on the way.

From Peter Jernigan, Fayetteville

- ... Your granddaddy had a mule named Maude.
- ... You've had a corncob fight in the hay loft.
- ... A two-rut road ran by the front of your house.
- ... You've primed or cropped sand lugs.
- ... Your grandma dipped Society Sweet snuff.

From Chelsey Monroe, Carthage

- ... When you got a sore throat your great-grandpa would give you a teaspoon of white lightning.
- ... If you missed church on Sunday morning, the preacher would come by that evening to see what had happened.

From Roger Askew, Raleigh (formerly Ahoskie)

- ... You know that Tyrrell County has only one syllable.
- ... Someone brings a Dan Doodle or Tom Thumb sausage to every church homecoming.
- ... Your aunt believes your cousin is "above his raising."
- ... Your church had a note-burning when the parsonage loan was paid off.
- ... Your folks are convinced that land prices are so high because all the northerners have been movin' down.
- ... The most popular family doctor in town is in his 70's and will retire soon.
- ... No one in your family older than you knows what "google" means, or that it can be a verb.
- ... You remember how small you felt when you stood inside the tobacco warehouse.
- ... You felt sad when the tobacco warehouse was torn down.

From the Myricks, West End

- ... People came in without knocking.
- ... Sundays after lunch you'd go to the lake and tie your hair on top of your head so your momma wouldn't know you went swimming before church later that night.
- ... You've been driving since you were 7.

From Diane Foster Mastalski, Waynesville

- ... When you played Yankees and Confederates, all the Yankees were imaginary because everyone wanted to be a Confederate.
- ... Your big sister would boil hickory nuts to make medicine to give to the wounded Confederates.
- ... You threw pebbles at the mule's ears to make him go.
- ... When you stumbled on the wild sow and her piglets in the woods, you knew you better run fast.
- ... Your Daddy said "much obliged" to people instead of "thank you."

From Tara B. Moore, Bessemer City

- ... You eat the Poor Man's Supper even when you have the money for a nice steak dinner.
- ... Your mountain-raised Grandmaw told you not to beg her by saying, "Quit baggin' me."
- ... You tell a visitor to "set in that cheer yonder." ☺

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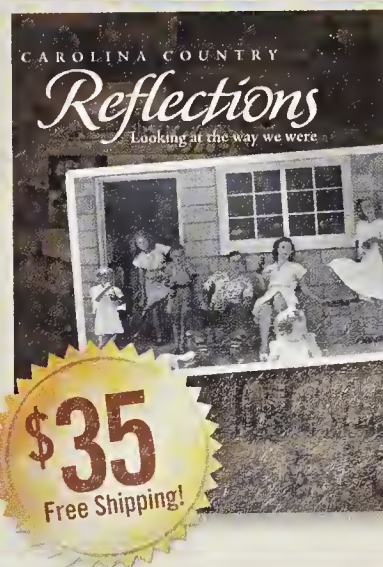
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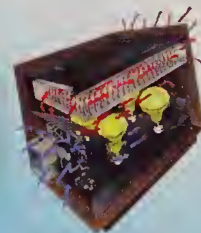
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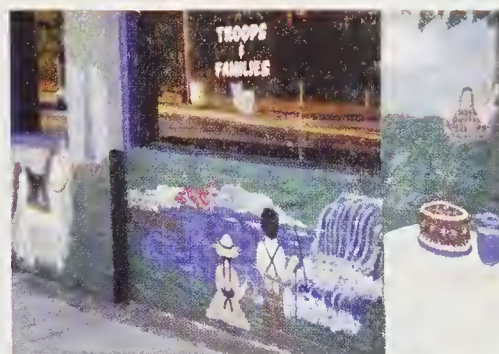
This patented gardening tool, invented by Rutherford EMC member Bruce Toole, can save gardeners and landscapers time trimming hedges, clearing out vegetable gardens, spreading compost, transporting mulch, raking and hauling leaves in the fall or just general yard clean-up. The WVI is bolted onto the rim of a metal wheelbarrow to add another 14 cubic feet of carrying capacity. Its size is adjustable to fit wheelbarrows from 24½ inches to 28½ inches wide, and its front gates open to allow you to dump a load as you would a conventional wheelbarrow. The WVI is made of heavy-gauge steel tubing, welded joints, powder-coated black paint to prevent rusting and 14-gauge, half-inch-square, galvanized wire screen. It comes with a kit that includes bolts, nuts, wires and a guide for drilling. (The WVI can also be attached to poly-tub wheelbarrows using load spreaders, which involves purchasing material separately.) The WVI, which doesn't include the wheelbarrow, sells for \$34.95, plus shipping.



(828) 288-9258

www.w-v-i.net**Mural in Eden**

If you are visiting Eden, you can see a quaint, turn-of-the-century style mural in its historical downtown district. The fanciful mural, at the intersection of Washington and



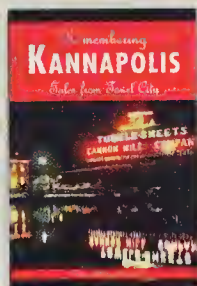
Bridge Streets, is the work of Reidsville artist Elizabeth Boles. Due to weather and the challenges of painting on brick, the 60-foot long, 9-foot high mural took several months to complete. Characters are positioned next to door frames and under windows. As Boles painted she and former Eden shop owner Phyllis Stack, who requested the mural, added any new mural characters to an evolving, imaginative tale. "You know, Bertha Bell was hurrying to meet Lula, back from a trip to Ireland," Boles explains. "She sees Mayor James (the one with the gold pocketwatch) surveying his town. The little pony is named Sassy and Duke the dog is waiting for the kids." Boles, an EnergyUnited member, does art on commission and teaches classes in watercolors, oil and acrylic painting.

(336) 932-0122

elizabethartist@netzero.net**on the bookshelf****"Kannapolis: Tales from the Towel City"**

When James William Cannon bought a sage field seven miles north of Concord and opened his Cabarrus Cotton Mill in 1892, he sowed the seeds of Kannapolis. By the time he died in 1921, the name Cannon was "synonymous with the word towel," and the "model mill town" grew into the city it is today.

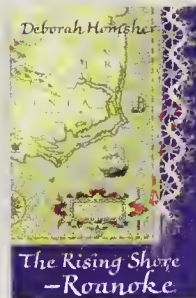
In this collection of writings first published in the Charlotte Observer's "A Look Back" column, Helen Arthur-Cornett brings the past to life through comic snippets and scenes from the city's earlier years. She tells about teaching practices in the first Kannapolis schools, the fierce, football rivalry between Cannon High and Concord High, and "Granddaddy W.D.'s" adventures with a runaway Model T. Softcover, 128 pages, \$17.99. Published by The History Press in Charleston, S.C.



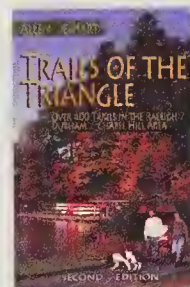
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www.historypress.net**Lost Colony novel**

The fate of the Lost Colony on Roanoke remains one of America's greatest mysteries. When the expedition's governor returned to Roanoke Island, he could find no trace of the hundred colonists he'd left on Roanoke Island three years earlier. "The Rising Shore—Roanoke" rediscovers the vanished pioneers, and is told by two women. Elenor Dare is daughter of the governor and mother of the first English child born in North America. Margaret Lawrence is her servant. Both struggle bravely, angling against each other, to go after their dreams. The novel, by author Deborah Homsher, is based on research concerning the earliest English ventures in America. Published by Blue Hull Press in Ithaca, N.Y. Softcover, 273 pages, \$13.95.

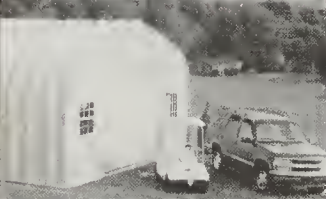
bluehullpress@gmail.comwww.risingshoreroanoke.com**"Trails of the Triangle"**

This second edition describes more than 400 trails in Wake, Durham, Orange and surrounding counties. The guide reflects changes in the region during the decade since the book was first published, and lists close to 250 trails within a 60-mile radius of Raleigh, Durham and Chapel Hill. The hikes range in distance from a few yards, such as the 92-yards Honeysuckle Lane Trail in Fuquay-Varina, to the 26-mile Falls Lake Trail. There are residential trails such as Shelley Lake Trail, which is so popular it has a centerline to separate traffic, and trails in remote forests such as the Summit Loop Trail. You can find trails for equestrians, in-line skaters, cyclists and the physically impaired, along with maps, photographs and a Mountains-to-Sea Trail appendix. Author Allen de Hart is a recognized hiking authority in Louisburg. Published by John F. Blair in Winston-Salem. Softcover, 299 pages, \$13.95.



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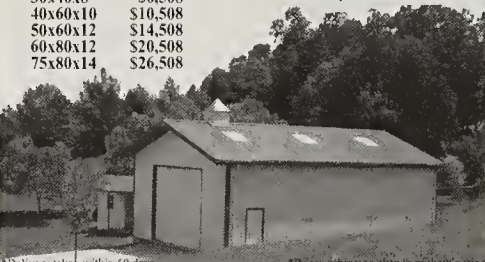
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						2
O	I	R	A	R	N	E

X	8
	L

				8			
C	A	R	O	L	I	N	A

Letters have been substituted for digits in this multiplication puzzle. Given E=2 and L=8, can you replace the missing digits to find the value of CAROLINA? Repeated letters stand for repeated digits.



You don't make _ _ _ _
u r b c

_ _ _ _ _ by _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
s u e e n l d n a c r a m c a e

—Presidential candidate John Edwards of North Carolina, speaking out against the **No Child Left Behind** program which emphasizes testing over teaching.

Use the capital letters in the code clue below to fill in the blanks above.
" A E F G H I N O R T W " means
u n s c r a m b l e d

Pity the poor immigrant
Abbreviated English may bring on the DTs

*FT sometimes stands for **fort**, and sometimes stands for **feet**.
and ST sometimes stands for **Saint** and sometimes stands for **street**.
If UT stands for **Utah**, and VT means **Vermont**,
why can't CT be **Cutah** and MT mean **Mermont**?
But CT means **Connecticut**, though on a box, it's **count**.
and MT means **Montana**, though sometimes only **Mount**.
Sometimes PT can mean a **pint**. Sometimes it means a **boat**.
The only way to learn these things is to learn them by rote.*

—cgj



C K R H E R O D G N
M O I U T F R C I H
P A N T O U C K A I
S E P G H M E M P U
R Q U N F E B R E Q
R A I A R O L U R F
W H S M N A R T H O

North Carolina has seven counties with names ten letters long. They are CUMBERLAND, MONTGOMERY, PASQUOTANK, PERQUIMANS, ROCKINGHAM, RUTHERFORD, and WASHINGTON. Two of these can be spelled out in this BOXED BUNCH by moving from letter to adjacent letter—up, down, left, right, or diagonally. But which two? How quickly can you find them?

SOUTHERN exposure.....

*You know it's
a small town when...*

A newcomer to Alleghany County in 1981, Nan Chase was shocked the first time she went grocery shopping to see the bag boy putting groceries in her station wagon before she had left the cash register.

"How did you know which car was mine?" she asked him when she got to the car.

"Easy," he answered. "I've never seen you before, and this is the only car in the lot I don't recognize."

Now a resident of Boone, Nan tells this story in the September/October issue of WNC magazine in an article entitled **Neighborhood Watch**. A contributing editor of the magazine, Nan Chase is the author of *Asheville: A History*, published this fall by McFarland & Company.

For answers, please see page 42

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\$150,000	\$793.81	30 YR. Fixed	4.87%	5.08%
\$225,000	\$1,190.72	30 YR. Fixed	4.87%	5.07%
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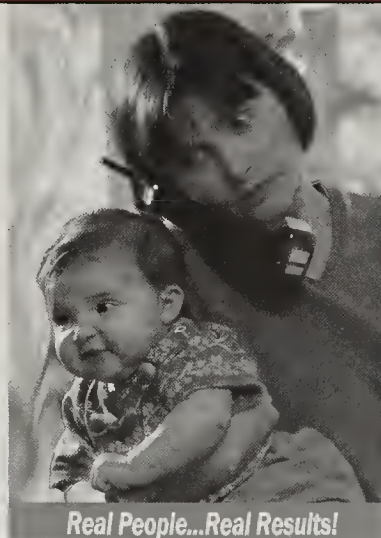
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March Events



Historic Oak View County Park in Wake County has mounted an exhibit called "Seeing the Light: How Electricity Changed Rural North Carolina" on display in the Main Farmhouse through June 29. "No other event in recent history has had as much of an impact on the way Americans lived and worked as electrification," says the park's announcement. Carolina Country magazine contributed archival materials to the show. A "Kid's Day: Experience Electricity" event is scheduled for March 29 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Historic Oak View Park is free and open Monday–Saturday, 8:30 a.m.–5 p.m.; Sunday, 1–5 p.m. at 4028 Carya Drive, Raleigh, NC 27610. Phone: (919) 250-1013. Web: www.wakegov.com/parks

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(800) 828-4244
www.historichendersonville.org

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Friday nights, Lansing
(336) 384-2382
www.blueridgemusic.org

Great Outdoor Expo

March 1–2, Morganton
(828) 438-5350
www.ci.morganton.nc.us

"Let's Put On A Show"

(Mickey Rooney)
March 7, Spindale
(828) 286-9990
www.foundationshows.org

Rock Hop Guided Hike

March 8, Chimney Rock Park
(800) 277-9611
www.chimneyrockpark.com

Spring Fling Sale

March 15, Concord
(803) 783-8049
www.knightshows.com

Pottery and Antiques Festival

March 22, Hickory
(828) 324-7294
www.catawbahistory.org

Easter Sunrise Service

March 23, Chimney Rock Park
(800) 277-9611
www.chimneyrockpark.com

Anne Oland, pianist

March 23, Brasstown
(828) 389-0033

Gem and Mineral Show

March 28–30, Morganton
(828) 439-1866
www.ci.morganton.nc.us

PIEDMONT

Tommy Jarrell Festival

Through March 1, Mount Airy
(800) 286-6193
www.surryarts.org

"Flora, The Red Menace"

Feb. 28–March 4, Greenville
(252) 328-4788
www.theatre-dance.ecu.edu

Art of the Blacksmith

March 1, Huntersville
(704) 875-2312
www.lattaplantation.org

The Grascals, bluegrass concert

March 1, Troy
(704) 985-6987

Free Day at Cape Fear Botanical Garden

March 1, Fayetteville
(910) 486-0221
www.capefearbg.org

Farmers Market

March 5, 12 & 19, Fayetteville
(910) 893-8206
www.downtownfayettevillemarket.com

"The Wizard of Oz"

March 6–9, Mount Airy
(800) 286-6193
www.surryarts.org

"Porgy & Bess"

March 6–9, Fayetteville
(910) 438-4100
www.crowncoliseum.com

Handbell Festival

March 8, Fayetteville
(919) 734-2965

Highfalls Old-Time Fiddlers Convention

March 8, High Falls
(910) 464-3600

Gun & Knife Show

March 8–9, Lexington
(336) 357-3057

Gun & Knife Show

March 8–9, Biscoe
(336) 879-1889
www.biscoeeventcenter.com

Music of the Carolinas:

Pratie Heads

March 9, Raleigh
(919) 807-7900
www.ncmuseumofhistory.org

Lazy-O Farm Easter Egg Dayz

March 10–29, Smithfield
(919) 934-1132

Mommy, Me and Museum Make Three

March 11, Fayetteville
(910) 486-1330

History a la Carte:

Illustrating Nature

March 12, Raleigh
(919) 807-7900
www.ncmuseumofhistory.org

Artist at Work: James Trantham

March 14–16, Raleigh
(919) 807-7900
www.ncmuseumofhistory.org

Misty River Concert

March 14, Mooresville
(704) 878-0743

Easter Egg Hunt

March 15, Wilson's Mills
(919) 938-3844

Rudy Theatre Concert Series

March 15, Selma
(919) 202-9927

Make It Take It: Banjos

March 15–16, Raleigh
(919) 807-7900
www.ncmuseumofhistory.org

Horse Show Series

March 15–16, Smithfield
(919) 934-1344

Bentonville Battlefield's

143rd Anniversary

March 15–16, Four Oaks
(910) 594-0789



NC Div. of Tourism

Newbold-White House, Hertford's Colonial Quaker home-turned-museum, opens March 1 at the site in Perquimans County. But the state's oldest brick house, built in 1730, may soon have to close its doors. The Perquimans County Restoration Association says it lacks about \$25,000 of the \$100,000 needed to maintain the landmark. The association does not receive state funding to operate the house, and donations have declined. The historic site includes a Quaker gravesite, herb garden, vineyard, smokehouse and a replica of a Colonial workboat. To help, call (252) 426-5123 or visit www.newboldwhitehouse.org

Wilma Mankiller, speaker
March 19, Fayetteville
(910) 672-1474
www.uncfsu.edu

"Ring of Fire," musical on Johnny Cash
March 14, Fayetteville
(910) 438-4100
www.crowncoliseum.com

Spring Herb Day
March 15, Indian Trail
(704) 882-2669

Re-Enactment of Battle of Aversboro
March 15-16, Dunn
(910) 483-5311
www.averasboro.com

Easter Egg Hunt
March 22, Huntersville
(704) 875-2312
www.lattaplantation.org

Sportscard and Sports Memorabilia Show
March 22, Raleigh
(919) 553-4285
www.insidepitch.com

"Cat On A Hot Tin Roof"
March 25, Winston-Salem
(336) 721-1945
www.ncarts.edu/performances

Punch Brothers Concert
March 29, Clayton
(919) 553-1737

Gardener's Garden Tour
March 30, Fayetteville
(910) 486-0221
www.capefearbg.org

COAST

Newbold-White House (spring opening)
March 1, Hertford
(252) 426-7567
www.newboldwhitehouse.com

Scouting Out Tryon Palace
March 1, New Bern
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A Civil War Living History
March 1-2, Manteo
(252) 475-1500
www.roanokeisland.com

"Into The Woods Jr."
March 1-2, 7-9, New Bern
(252) 633-0567

Taste of the Beach, culinary festival
March 6-9, Dare County
(252) 473-6094

Chris Smither
March 8, Oriental
(252) 249-3670
www.pamlicomusic.org

Wine Tasting
March 14, Hertford
(252) 425-7567
www.newboldwhitehouse.com

Gran'daddy Junebug
March 20, New Bern
(800) 767-1560
www.tryonpalace.org

Haunted Evening, historical drama
March 28, New Bern
(252) 638-8558
www.newbernhistorical.org

Daffodil Festival
March 29, Fremont
(919) 242-6012

Herb & Garden Fair
March 29-30, Wilmington
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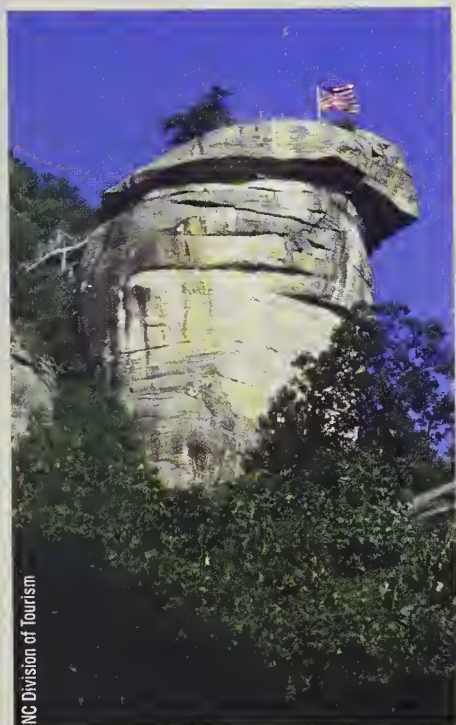
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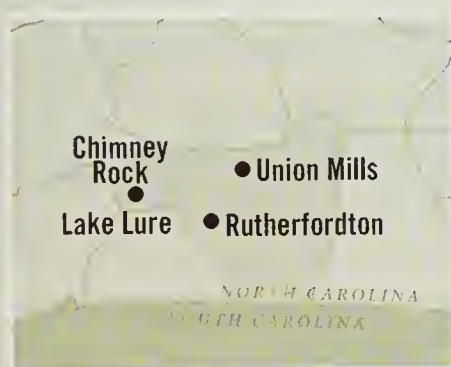
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CAROLINA COUNTRY adventures



Chimney Rock towers 315 feet above Hickory Nut Gorge at the edge of the Blue Ridge Mountains. It sits at an elevation of 2,280 feet with a 75-mile view in all directions.

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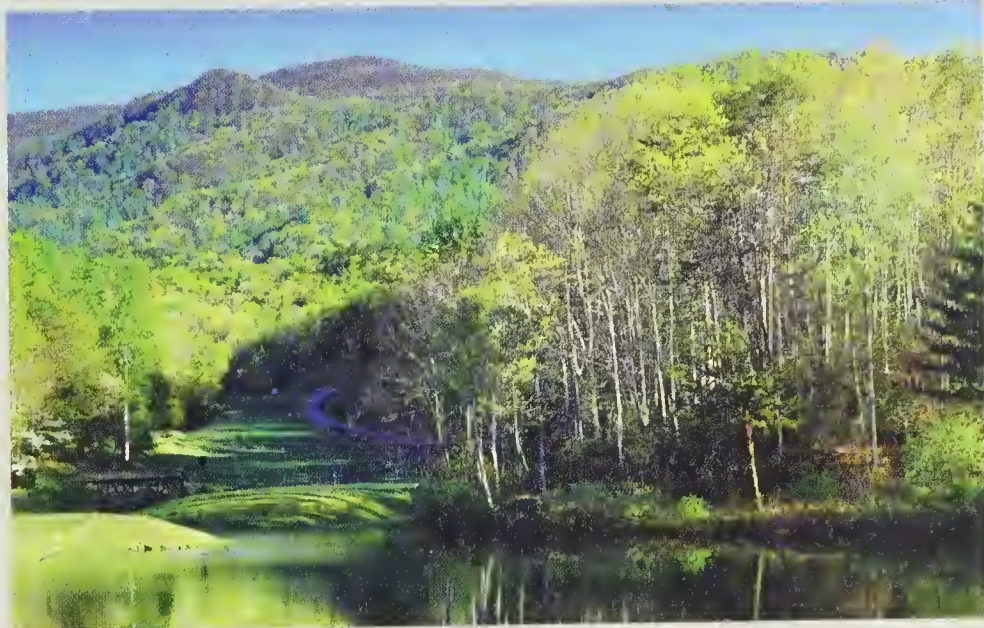
If you've watched the movies "Last of the Mohicans," or "Dirty Dancing," you've seen the natural beauty of Rutherford County. The county boasts "Mother Nature designed our set. Come see what we've added." The additions include small towns such as Chimney Rock Village, Cliffside, Forest City, Lake Lure, Rutherfordton and Spindale. Each offers a take on the area's natural resources, as well as shops and cultural offerings, restaurants and locally-owned inns. Visit the Bennett Classic Cars Museum in Forest City. Mine for gems outside of Rutherfordton, Union Mills and Chimney Rock. Visit the Green River Plantation in Rutherfordton, as well as the KidSenses Children's InterActive Museum. In Forest City, learn about farming at the Rutherford County Farm Museum. The Cherry Bounce Trail is a historic byway that winds through hills and valleys.

Three top spots:

Chimney Rock Park: The stone entrance to this park lies in Chimney Rock Village, one of the state's smallest incorporated villages. The highest elevation in the park is Exclamation Point at 2,480 feet. The "chimney" formation that juts out of the landscape stands 315 feet high at an elevation of 2,280 feet. Once on top, you have a 75-mile view in any direction. The park encompasses Hickory Nut Gorge, the 404-foot Hickory Nut Falls, Devils' Head rock outcropping, the Needle's Eye passage between Rock Pile and Pulpit Rock and the interesting Moonshiners Cave. Trails for all skill levels are available. A nature center, picnic areas and a café with a view are also on site. Admission fee. (800) 277-9611. www.chimneyrockpark.com.

Lake Lure: Below Chimney Rock Mountain lay the waters of 700-acre Lake Lure, a man-made lake whose depths reach 110 feet at the dam. The lake is often referred to as the "Gem of the Carolinas." Formed for hydroelectricity, the lake waters are fed from the Rocky Broad River's path through a series of rapids in Hickory Nut Gorge. The lake offers visitors access to watersports, boating, fishing and local wildlife, a public beach and picnic area. The town of Lake Lure also provides visitors a taste of small town life. (828) 625-9983. www.townoflakelure.com.

Local gem mining: Families will enjoy mining for precious gems and gold at one of the numerous gem-mining businesses in the county. Gold and gems such as aquamarine, emerald, ruby, garnets, amethysts and other precious stones can be found. The mines are dotted along the Rocky Broad River. Most mines also offer on-site stone cutting and jewelry making. Visit Broad River Gems and Mining, (828) 286-1220, www.broadrivergemsandmining.com; Chimney Rock Gemstone Mine, (828) 625-5524, www.chimneyrockgemmine.com; and Thermal City Gold Mine, (828) 286-3016, www.huntforgold.com.



Lake Lure invites a variety of recreational pursuits.

Are you getting enough fiber?

Regularly eating enough fiber may help reduce your risk of developing heart disease, diabetes, obesity and constipation. It is recommended that adults get 25–40 grams of fiber every day. The typical American averages only about 11 grams of fiber per day!

Types of fiber

Most food sources contain both soluble and insoluble fiber, and both are important. Soluble fiber is primarily found in oats, beans, peas and fruits and may help lower cholesterol. Insoluble fiber is mostly found in bran, nuts, seeds and vegetables and helps move waste through your colon. Both types should be part of a healthy diet. Eat a variety of high fiber foods to get all the health benefits that fiber has to offer!


Fiber supplements

Initially it may be hard to reach your daily fiber intake goal, so consider using a fiber supplement (preferably one containing psyllium). Be sure to drink plenty of water with your fiber supplement. If you take prescription medication, or have a history of diabetes or intestinal disorders, speak to your doctor before increasing fiber intake above 20 grams per day.



Whole wheat bread contains 2–3 grams of fiber per slice while white bread adds little, if any, fiber to your diet.

8 simple strategies for eating more fiber

- 1. Read Labels.** It only takes a second. These terms will help you choose foods with more fiber:
 - High Fiber (5 grams or more per serving)
 - Good Source (2.5 to 2.9 grams per serving)
- 2. Eat More Beans.** Nothing packs a fiber punch like beans. Enjoy a variety and benefit from their many vitamins and minerals as well.
- 3. Start Your Day with a High Fiber Cereal.** Choose one with at least 5 grams of fiber per serving.
- 4. Eat the Whole Fruit.** 100 percent fruit juice counts toward your daily fruit intake and contains vitamins, but most don't provide any fiber. Skip the OJ and eat an orange, have a pear at lunch and munch on apple slices for a snack—you've just added 12 grams of fiber to your day.
- 5. Switch to Brown Rice.** It has a delicious nutty taste and provides more fiber per ½ cup than white rice.
- 6. Choose 100 Percent Whole Wheat Bread.** With 2–3 grams of fiber per slice this can make an average sandwich “fiber-licious.” Remember, white bread provides little, if any, fiber. Choosing “White Wheat” varieties may make the transition easy for children.
- 7. Try Whole Grains.** Oats, barley, sorghum, quinoa, hominy and buckwheat all count. Give them a try, you may find a new favorite dish.
- 8. Sneak Fiber into Your Cooking.** Add ground flax seeds to cereal, oatmeal to meatloaf, and whole wheat flour to baked goods. You could even try some psyllium in a smoothie for an added fiber punch. 

From “Your Wellness for Life Guide,” published by Harris Teeter, a grocery based in Matthews, N.C. The complete guide and daily tracker are available free at all Harris Teeter stores. For more information and a free 7-day meal planner, visit www.harristeeter.com.



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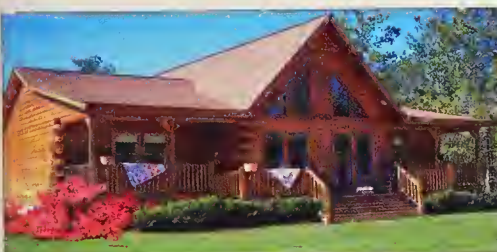
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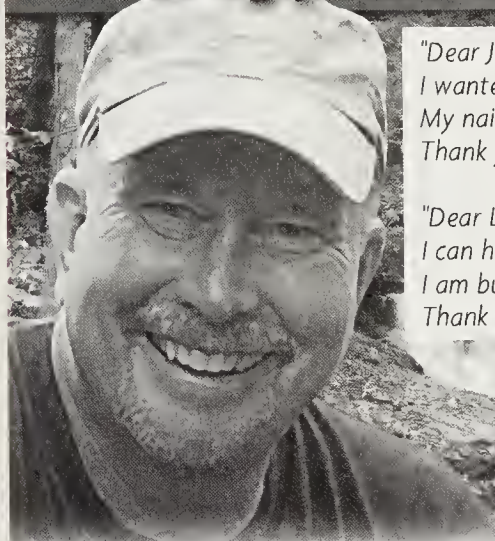
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Warming drawers efficiently keep meals on standby

With busy and diverse schedules, it can be difficult for families to prepare foods and serve them in an energy-efficient manner.

The heating element in an electric oven can easily use more than 2,000 watts. The most efficient method to prepare a dinner is a single meal, large enough for the entire family, cooked in the oven. It takes about as much energy to bake one potato in the oven as it does to bake six potatoes, so it is generally more efficient to make as much as possible at one time. The same is true of frozen prepared dishes.

A microwave oven can cook smaller quantities of food using less energy than a conventional oven, but some of the large models use almost 1,300 watts of electricity. A microwave oven does not develop enough residual heat to keep foods safely warm if not consumed immediately. Any extras saved for a late dinner have to be refrigerated and later reheated, consuming even more energy.

Using a warming drawer is an efficient alternative to using a microwave oven when your family members eat dinner at different times. Warming drawers use between 450 and 600 watts of electricity to keep entire dinners warm. The heating elements are thermostatically controlled, so they are on only part of the time. Most foods must be kept above about 140 degrees to ensure they do not spoil. Warming drawers plug into any standard 120-volt electric outlet.

Warming drawers are typically sold in widths of 27 and 30 inches, but 24- and 36-inch wide models are also available. These widths are selected to match the standard widths of kitchen cabinets and other appliances. A 36-inch wide model from Dacor will hold six 9-inch dinner plates side by side. The 27- and 30-inch models will fit four 11-inch plates and a 24-inch model will hold four 9-inch plates.

When closed, a warming drawer looks similar to just another drawer under the countertop. The controls are hidden behind the front cover, so it must be opened to access them. Stainless steel models can give the kitchen a more contemporary and professional appearance.

A warming drawer can also be mounted under the oven for an integrated look. This is also a convenient location for transferring food from the oven to the warming drawer. Transferring the food quickly allows less time for it to cool, so the warming drawer has to use less electricity to keep it warm. Keep in mind, a warming drawer is not designed to reheat or cook food initially. Always use a standard appliance to cook food thoroughly first.

The better models have built-in moisture controls. Most foods taste "just cooked" when kept warm at the moist




This warming drawer looks exactly like a standard drawer. It has a large party tray inside for entertaining.

setting. Others foods, such as baked potatoes and fried foods, are often better when stored at the crisp setting. You can experiment to see how your family prefers the crispness.

The temperature settings typically range from 100 to 210 degrees with four set points. Some models can be set as low as 70 degrees and as high as 250 degrees. A lower temperature setting consumes less electricity. If you bake yeast dough, select a warming drawer with a low 90-degree moist setting to proof the dough.

For food safety, always preheat the drawer before placing food in it. If it is not preheated, the temperature of the food may drop below a safe temperature. Most warming drawer models preheat to 160 degrees in 20 to 40 minutes. Miele's warming drawers use a small convection fan to reduce the preheat time requirement to just 10 minutes.

When cooking meals, use the smallest cooking appliance you can to save energy.

Small countertop appliances use less energy than a standard oven. When baking a small casserole use a small broiler oven, which preheats quickly. This is particularly true for items that cook relatively fast. For items that bake for several hours, a well-insulated standard oven can actually be more efficient. 

James Dulley is an engineer and syndicated columnist for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

The following companies offer warming drawers:

Dacor (800) 793-0093
www.dacor.com

General Electric (800) 626-2000
www.geappliances.com

Jenn-Air (800) 688-1100
www.jennair.com

Miele (800) 843-7231
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Italian Meatball Hoagies

- 4 eggs
- ½ cup milk
- 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tablespoons dried parsley flakes
- 1½ teaspoons dried basil
- 1½ teaspoons dried oregano
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 2 pounds ground beef
- 2 cups crushed saltines (about 60 crackers)

In a large bowl, combine the first eight ingredients. Crumble beef over mixture and sprinkle with cracker crumbs; mix gently. Shape into 1-inch balls. Place in un-greased 15-by-10-by-1-inch baking pans. Bake at 350 degrees for 20–25 minutes or until meat is no longer pink. Drain on paper towels.

In a large saucepan, combine the tomato sauce, Parmesan cheese, oregano, basil, parsley and salt. Bring to a boil over medium heat; add meatballs. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 20 minutes or until heated through. Serve meatballs and sauce on buns. Top with mozzarella cheese if desired.

Yield: 12 servings



Stuffed Chicken Rolls

- 6 large boneless skinless chicken breast halves
- 6 slices fully cooked ham
- 6 slices Swiss cheese
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- ½ teaspoon rubbed sage
- ¼ teaspoon paprika
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 1 can (10¾ ounces) condensed cream of chicken soup, undiluted
- ½ cup chicken broth
- Chopped fresh parsley, optional

Flatten chicken to ⅛-inch thickness. Place ham and cheese on each breast. Roll up and tuck in ends; secure with a toothpick. Combine the flour, Parmesan cheese, sage, paprika and pepper; coat chicken on all sides. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour.

In a large skillet, brown chicken in oil over medium-high heat. Transfer to a 5-quart slow cooker. Combine soup and broth; pour over chicken. Cover and cook on low for 4–5 hours. Remove toothpicks. Garnish with parsley if desired.

Yield: 6 servings

Sauce:

- 2 cans (15 ounces each) tomato sauce
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1½ teaspoons dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon dried basil
- 1 teaspoon dried parsley flakes
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 12 submarine sandwich buns (about 6 inches), split
- Sliced mozzarella cheese, optional



Recipes are by Taste of Home magazine. For a sample copy, send \$2 to Taste of Home, Suite 4321, PO Box 990, Greendale WI 53129-0990. Visit the Web page at www.tasteofhome.com

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Winning reader recipe

Cream Cheese Peach Cake

- ½ cup milk
- ¾ cup plain flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 package (3½-ounce) vanilla pudding (not instant)
- 1 egg
- 3 tablespoons soft butter or margarine
- 1 can (20-ounce) sliced peaches
- 1 softened cream cheese (8 ounce)
- ½ cup sugar
- 3 tablespoons syrup from peaches
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon

Combine first 7 ingredients in a large bowl, beating 2 minutes at medium speed. Pour into a well greased "deep-dish" pie plate. Drain peaches reserving some syrup. Arrange peach slices over this mixture. Beat cream cheese, peach syrup and ½ cup sugar at medium speed for 2 minutes.

Spoon and spread over peaches to within 1 inch of edge of batter. Mix sugar and cinnamon together and sprinkle over top of everything. Bake at 350 degrees until crust is golden brown. (30 to 35 minutes).

Janice Brackett of Wake Electric in Youngsville will receive \$25 for submitting this recipe.



Special Brunch Bake

- 2 tubes (4 ounces each) refrigerated buttermilk biscuits
- 3 cartons (8 ounces each) frozen egg substitute, thawed
- 7 ounces Canadian bacon, chopped
- 1 cup (4 ounces) shredded reduced-fat cheddar cheese
- 1 cup (4 ounces) shredded reduced-fat mozzarella cheese
- ½ cup chopped fresh mushrooms
- ½ cup finely chopped onion
- ¼ teaspoon pepper

Arrange biscuits in a 13-by-9-by-2-inch baking dish coated with nonstick cooking spray. In a bowl, combine the remaining ingredients; pour over biscuits. Bake, uncovered, at 350 degrees for 30–35 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean.

Yield: 12 servings

Send Us Your Recipes

Contributors whose recipes are published will receive \$25. We retain reprint rights for all submissions. Include your name, address, phone number (for questions), and the name of your electric cooperative. Mail to: Carolina Country Kitchen, P.O. Box 27306, Raleigh, NC 27611 or E-mail to: Jenny.Lloyd@carolinacountry.com

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15	\$.59	\$.55
35	\$ 1.30	\$ 1.08
55	\$ 3.20	\$ 2.53
65	\$ 5.36	\$ 4.14
75	\$ 10.23	\$ 7.64
85	\$ 19.77	\$ 16.52

* Does not include \$36 policy fee, minimums may apply

Sample Monthly Rates per 1,000*

<u>Issue</u> <u>Age</u>	<u>Male</u> (tobacco)	<u>Female</u> (tobacco)
5	N/A	N/A
15	N/A	N/A
35	\$ 1.79	\$ 1.49
55	\$ 4.30	\$ 3.55
65	\$ 7.18	\$ 5.41
75	\$ 13.24	\$ 8.85
85	\$ 26.26	\$ 17.67

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